

ROODS, REELDS  
AND  
ROODRIGTS

F. BLICH BOND  
AND  
DOM BEDE GAMM

VOL. I.



THE LIBRARY  
OF  
THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CALIFORNIA  
LOS ANGELES

19/5

L









ROODSCREENS

AND

ROODLOFTS





PLATE I



SAINT DAVID'S CATHEDRAL  
SCREEN BETWEEN CHOIR AND PRESBYTERY

BY  
FREDERICK BLIGH BOND  
F.R.I.B.A.  
*Hon. Diocesan Architect for Bath and Wells*  
AND  
THE REV. DOM BEDE CAMM  
O.S.B.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

LONDON: SIR ISAAC PITMAN & SONS, LTD.  
NO. 1 AMEN CORNER, E.C.    ❧    ❧    1909

PRINTED BY SIR ISAAC PITMAN  
& SONS, LTD., LONDON, BATH  
AND NEW YORK • • 1909



## PREFACE

THESE two volumes embody the result of some seven years' research and collection.

For the first Part of the work, which is a historical essay on screenwork, from the earliest times down to the Post-Reformation period, Mr. Frederick Bligh Bond is responsible, and would wish it to be understood that his views of the origin of screenwork are not in all cases those held by his colleague, Dom Bede Camm.

The essay in question is the fruit of several years' work, and incorporates in a complete and coherent form the substance of papers contributed to the Proceedings of the Saint Paul's Ecclesiological Society in 1903, and to the Journal of the R.I.B.A. in October, 1904, and October, 1905.

In these essays the historical, or evolutionary, method of dealing with the subject was adopted, and the story of the use of screenwork in the English church throughout the Reformation and the Post-Reformation periods was first handled in this manner.

Much new matter has been added in the present work, and the whole argument rendered clearer, and consolidated.

Mr. Bligh Bond desires to remove a certain confusion which has arisen between the personality of himself and that of his friend and namesake, Mr. Francis Bond, who, by a curious coincidence was led to publish his work on "Screens and Galleries" whilst the present work was in the press. The two schemes are, of course, totally distinct, but present a curious parallel in their main features, which is heightened by the choice made of illustrations.

Yet, except for the fact that Mr. Francis Bond has drawn material from the published essays above-mentioned (for which he has made very kind acknowledgment) the matter is one of pure coincidence.

The theories as to the origin of the screens respectively held by the two exponents are, it need hardly be said, quite independent, and differ widely one from the other.

The author of this essay desires to render his sincere thanks to Rev. F. E. Brightman, Mr. F. C. Eeles, and Dr. Cuthbert Atchley for having read his proofs and contributed many valuable notes, also to Mr. Francis Bond, who at a quite recent date has performed the same friendly task.

His cordial acknowledgments are also due to the numerous friends among the clergy and laity who have assisted him in the contribution of notes, sketches, and photographs: first to Mr. Crossley for his valuable series of screen measurements in the Devonshire

section, as well as for many important notes of existing screenwork ; to Mr. Francis F. Fox, F.S.A., Rev. F. W. Weaver, F.S.A., Rev. Canon Mayo, Mr. Reginald Weaver, Mr. Fletcher Moss, Rev. E. Hay, the Editor of the R.I.B.A. Journal, and the Secretaries of the Somerset Archaeological Society, for the use of blocks ; to Rev. T. Watson Allen, Rev. C. W. Whistler, Dr. Hermitage Day, Rev. W. F. B. Ward, Mr. Gouldsmith, Rev. T. Clark, Mr. W. Moline, Dr. George Norman, Mr. G. Gilliam, Miss F. Cave, Rev. H. C. Bond, Mr. Herbert Read, of Exeter, Rev. Dr. Miller, Mr. Alfred Watkins, Mr. H. Samson, the Vicars of Ruishton and Winsham, and others for photographs ; to Mr. Alex. G. Bond, A.R.I.B.A., for measured drawings ; to many other friends, including the Rectors and Vicars of many of the churches whose screenwork is mentioned, for the valuable notes they have so willingly given, and who, did space permit, should receive individual thanks, and lastly to those living authors from whose published works some diagrams have been borrowed, viz., Professor Baldwin Brown, and Messrs. MacGibbon & Ross.

If, in the long list of those to whom he is indebted, the author has inadvertently omitted certain names which should have been mentioned—and he fears this is but too likely—he trusts that his friends will forgive an oversight due to no lack of gratitude on his part.

Dom Bede Camm makes separate acknowledgments at the end of Part III in Vol. II.

The delay in the appearance of the work, which has been withheld for several months, is due to a difficulty in procuring illustrations which were deemed suitable for the purpose.

A series of one hundred collotype plates was originally arranged for, and these were largely intended for the reproduction of an exceedingly fine series of photographs of the detailed enrichments of Devonshire screens, taken by Mr. Fred Crossley, of Knutsford, specially for this volume.

It was found better in a few cases to substitute half-tone blocks in order to do justice to Mr. Crossley's photographs, which were of quite exceptional merit.

F. B. B.

# CONTENTS

## VOL. I

## ERRATA LIST

Page 127—for 1308 *read* 1380.

.. 304 (ref. to CHIVELSTONE)—for *Architectural Review*, 1904, read 1900, p. 67.

196 (under TRULL)—for Plate LXVIII B Devon Section *read*  
Somerset Section.

Plate XCV (illus. to BRIDFORD) should be XCVIII.

.. CXXVIII<sub>A</sub>—for Deane, Wilts, *read* Deane, Hants.

## ADDENDA LIST

TO SOMERSET SCREENS.

Ayshford Chapel (near Burlescombe) contains an early Perpendicular Roodscreen with original colouring.

TO CORNISH SCREENS.

*St. Clear.* Roodscreen by G. H. Fellowes Prynne, erected 1908, containing rich tracery in rectangular compartments.

TO PEMBROKE SCREENS.

*Minwear.* Ancient mural screen with narrow arch and sidelights; also two lights at a greater elevation, in the wall over central archway.

FROM THE

5. The Temple Veils.  
 6. Eastern Uses. § 4. The  
 7. Cave. § 6. The Screen  
 8. Norman Models : Origin of  
 9. Screens. § 11. Union of  
 10. Vest. § 12. Genesis of  
 11. Screens ; Ancient Principles  
 12. in Church and others :  
 13. of the Sanctuary in  
 14. the East ; Links between East  
 15. and West. Ch. Bradford-on-Avon.  
 16. Choir or Sanctuary  
 17. Brixworth, etc. ; The  
 18. Examples from Dorset  
 19. Stone Chancel Screen ;  
 20. Breast-walls for same  
 21. purpose, in Chancel Walls  
 22. and Treatment, Enlarge-  
 23. ment in Determination  
 24. in lieu of Lateral Open-  
 25. ing ; English examples  
 26. recd. Diagram Sheets  
 27. .. .. pp. 3-53

3. The Triple Division ;  
 4. Character of Wood ;  
 5. 24. Leading Varieties  
     Screens in Bucks and  
     pens Clear of Tracery ;  
 25. Further Analysis of  
     ving upon Wood ; and  
 1. § 26. Decadence of  
     Decline of the National  
     . . . . . pp. 59-70

section, as well as for many important notes of existing screenwork ; to Mr. Francis F. Fox, F.S.A., Rev. F. W. Weaver, F.S.A., Rev. Canon Mayo, Mr. Reginald Weaver, Mr. Fletcher Moss, Rev. E. Hay, the Editor of the R.I.B.A. Journal, and the Secretaries of the Somerset Archaeological Society, for the use of blocks ; to Rev. T. Watson Allen, Rev. C. W. Whistler, Dr. Hermitage Day, Rev. W. F. B. Ward, Mr. Gouldsmith, Rev. T. Clark, Mr. W. Moline, Dr. George Norman, Mr. G. Gillham, Miss F. Cave, Rev. H. C. Bond, Mr. Herbert Read, of Exeter, Rev. Dr. Miller, Mr. Alfred Watkins, Mr. H. Samson, the Vicars of

Alex. G. Bond, A.R.I.

the Rectors and Vica

the valuable notes th

receive individual tha

some diagrams have

MacGibbon & Ross.

If, in the long list  
omitted certain names  
likely—he trusts that I  
his part.

Dom Bede Camm  
Vol. II.

The delay in the ap  
is due to a difficulty  
purpose.

A series of one hund  
largely intended for the  
detailed enrichments of  
specially for this volun

It was found better in  
to Mr. Crossley's photc

# CONTENTS

## VOL. I

### PART I

#### A SURVEY OF ECCLESIASTICAL SCREENWORK FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD

##### SECTION I

###### EARLY SCREENWORK

§ 1. INTRODUCTORY: Antiquity of the Screen; Pre-Christian Origins; The Temple Veils. § 2. Early Christian Churches: Their Interior Divisions. § 3. Early Western Uses. § 4. The Tripartite Division of Churches. § 5. Separation of the Narthex from the Nave. § 6. The Screen of the Sanctuary. § 7. The Cancelli. § 8. Their Various Forms. § 9. Roman Models: Origin of the Basilican Churches. § 10. Subdivisions of the Nave; Early Choir Enclosures. § 11. Union of Choir and Sanctuary; How Effected in Italy; How Brought About in the West. § 12. Genesis of a new Ecclesiological type in England in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries; Ancient Principles Conserved. § 13. Types of Twelfth Century Plan; Peterchurch; Checkenden Church and others; Diagrams of Apsidal and Square-ended Chancels. § 14. Enclosure of the Sanctuary in Anglo-Saxon Churches. § 15. The Oriental Traditions of Church-building; Links between East and West. § 16. The Narrow Sanctuary Arch; Saint Lawrence Church, Bradford-on-Avon. § 17. Romano-British Types of Plan. § 18. The Triple Arcade as a Choir or Sanctuary Screen in Churches built prior to the Eighth Century; Reculvers; Brixworth, etc.; The same as a Mural Screen to Chancels of the Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries; Examples from Dorset, Kent, Sussex, etc. (numerous figures). § 19. Development of the Stone Chancel Screen; Examples from Suffolk, Cambs., etc. § 20. Altars against Lateral Openings; Breast-walls for same; St. Januarius, Naples. § 21. Formation of Hagioscopes in the Twelfth Century, in Chancel Walls with Single Narrow Arch; Early "Makeshift" Squints; Later Architectural Treatment, Enlargement of Lateral Openings; Union of this and Parallel Developments resulting in Determination of General Type of Stone Screen. § 22. Mural Screens with Arched Recesses in lieu of Lateral Openings; Their Use as Reredoses; Example of Fourth Century at Nola, S. Italy; English examples: Hauxton, etc., etc. (numerous figures); The Recessed Walls sometimes Pierced. Diagram Sheets of the Four Types of Mural Screen—A, B, C, and D .. .. . pp. 3-58

##### SECTION II

###### MEDIÆVAL SCREENWORK

§ 23. Continuity of Ancient Principles in the Screenwork of Mediæval Times; The Triple Division; Arched-headed Openings; Enclosure of the Chancel Opening over the Screen; Character of Wood-screens in the Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries. § 24. Leading Varieties of Fifteenth Century Screenwork; Devonshire Screens; Cornish Screens; Screens in Bucks and Herts; East Anglian Screenwork—Its Exceptional Character; Arcaded Screens Clear of Tracery; Comparison of Detail; The East Anglian More Imitative of Stonework. § 25. Further Analysis of Detail; Local Reasons for Difference in Character; Influence of Stone-carving upon Wood; and *vice versa*; Traditional Elements; British Wicker-work and Vine-tendrils. § 26. Decadence of Wood-carving temp. Henry VIII; Introduction of Foreign Detail; Rapid Decline of the National Art; Its Submergence and Extinction .. .. . pp. 59-70

## SECTION III

## THE ICONOSTASIS AND THE ROODLOFT

§ 27. The Iconostasis known in the Fifth Century in Egypt, Greece, etc.; Solid Screens in the Churches of Taurida; Ispahan; Malabar, etc.; The Use of the Iconostasis in the Armenian Church; Iconostases of Georgia, Mingrelia, Asia Minor, etc. § 28. St. Mark's, Venice; Its Superb Screenwork; Wooden Iconostases of the Levant. § 29. Character of those in Greece and Egypt; Similarity of Character between some Eastern and Western Examples. § 30. Definition of the Roodloft; Its Development from the Ambones or Choir Pulpits; Uses of the Ambo. § 31. Union of the Ambo with the Low Choir Screen; Evolution of the High Screen, and Gallery, or Pulpitum; The Ambo in English Churches; Pulpitum of Lanfranc's Cathedral; Origin of the Jubé. § 32. Introduction of Jubés into French Cathedrals; Their Massive Construction; Meaning of the Name; Early Uses of the Jubé; Its Arrangement; The Single-doored Type; The Double-doored Type; English Forms and Examples. § 33. Duplication of Screens and Lofts in Cistercian and other Churches. § 34. Uses of the Jubé in Later Times; Altars on the Roodloft, and Attached to the Screen; Their Subsequent Removal; Formation of Special Chantry Chapels. § 35. Lofts Introduced into Parish Churches; Reasons for their Introduction; The Roodloft as an Iconostasis. § 36. The Great Rood. Its Importance in Connection with the Chancel Screen; Description of Early Roods—their Position. § 37. Origin of the Roodbeam; Its Place in our Parish Churches; Altars at the Foot of the Rood; Spaciousness of Early Roodlofts; Double Screens beneath them. § 38. Low Elevation of some Lofts; Secondary Galleries over same; Their Probable Uses. § 39. Roodloft Staircases and Turrets. § 40. The Loft as a Music Gallery; Its Increasing Importance for this Purpose; The Loft Superseded as a Pulpitum in the Fifteenth Century; Erection of Pulpits on the Floor of the Church, concurrently with Lofts; Rare Survivals of the Older Use. § 41. Change in the Form of Later Lofts; The Screens placed Centrally below them; Projections for Organs; Organs in the Lofts. § 42. Destruction of Lofts since the Reformation; Roodlofts still Surviving. § 43. List of Stone Jubés; Descriptive Notes. § 44. List of Wooden Roodlofts or Organ Lofts; Descriptive Notes on the Various Types—Plain Fronts—Traceried ditto, Canopied ditto; Paintings and Statuary; The "Poor Man's Bible." § 45. Enclosure of the space above the Chancel Screen by Walling, or by a Partition; The Tympanum, a Background to the Rood and Figures; Hagioscopes in the Tympanum; The "Doom"; Examples from Wenhaston and Dauntsey (Figs.); Effect of the Imagery; The Splendour of the Old-time Chancel Barrier. § 46. The Tympanum a Substitute for the Outer Veil of the Temple; Persistence of this Feature, Before and After the Reformation; Painted Veils; The Analogy to the Temple Emphasized in the Seventeenth Century. § 47. The Inner or Sanctuary Veil; Its Position in Mediæval Chancels; The "Lenten" Veil; Our Chancel Rails Occupy this Position; Secondary Screens; Canopied Sanctuaries .. .. . pp. 71-97

## SECTION IV

## POST-REFORMATION SCREENWORK

§ 48. The Roodloft in the Parish Church—Its Uses Summarised; Superstitious Usages Condemned at the Reformation; The Lofts Retained as Minstrels' Galleries; Note on Galleries; Pews in the Roodloft. § 49. Suppression of the Monasteries; Removal of Monastic Screenwork to Parish Churches. § 50. Changes in the year 1547; Demolition of Roods, etc.; The Lofts Retained; Evidence of their Construction and Repair; Alterations in 1552; Pillage of the Churches. § 51. Accession of Mary; Restoration of Roods; Removal of Royal Arms. § 52. Accession of Elizabeth; Reversion to Previous Order; Roods Again Destroyed; Lofts Preserved but "Reformed" or "Translated"; Orders of 1561; Instructions of the Elizabethan Archbishops; The Screens Religiously Preserved; Definition of the Elizabethan Orders as regards the Lofts; Instances of their Transposition, with Choir and Organist, to the West. § 53. The Gallery Fronts; Some Retained, others Replaced by Wainscoting; Formation of Pews over Screens; The Alternatives open to Parochial Authorities; Careful Wording of the Injunctions. § 54. Persistence of the Tympanum; Effect of the Canons of 1604; The Tablets Fixed over the Screens; The Tympanum in the Eighteenth Century; Lockington and Parracombe. § 55. Paintings on the Tympana; Examples from Bridestowe, etc. § 56. Post-Reformation Lofts; Rodney Stoke; Seventeenth Century Galleries. § 57. Perpetuation of Gothic Forms in Screenwork; The High Screens of the Early Stuart Period; Great Revival under Laud. § 58. Attitude of Representative Churchmen at this Date towards Screenwork; The Commonwealth; Destruction of Organs; Cromwellian Screens at Berwick. § 59. Restoration of the Monarchy; Continuity of Principle in Church Building; Episcopal Sanction of Screens. § 60. The Eighteenth Century; New Influences of Modernism; Maintenance of Ancient Landmarks; Hanoverian Screens and Gates; The Last Work of the Old Order; Nineteenth Century Vandalism; Mistakes of "Restorers"; Increasing Appreciation of the Chancel Screen in more Recent Times .. .. . pp. 98-121

## PART II

SCREENWORK IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET . . . . . p. 125

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

## VOL. I

### PART I (PLATES)

PLATE	SUBJECT	AUTHOR'S NAME	PAGE
I	St. David's Cathedral : Screen of Presbytery	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>photo</i> )	.. <i>frontispiece</i>
SECTION I			
II	Alkmaar, Holland : Bronze screen ..	H. Dare Bryan ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	<i>facing</i> 12
III	St. Clemente, Rome : North ambo ..	F. F. Fox, F.S.A. ..	.. 16
IV	Cairo : Roodscreen in Coptic Church ..	A. E. Gouldsmith ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	.. 18
V	Glastonbury Abbey : Choir screen ..	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>delt.</i> ) ..	.. 22
VI	Tawstock Church : Presbytery screen ..	" ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	.. 24
VIIA	Stebbing : Chancel arcade ..	" " ..	.. 28
" B	Great Bardfield : Chancel arcade ..	" " ..	.. 28
VIII A	Chichester, St. Mary's : Screen ..	" ( <i>delt.</i> ) }	.. 32
" B	Stanton Harcourt : " ..	Rev. T. Clark ( <i>photo</i> ) }	
IX	Lavenham : Roodscreen ..	F. Bligh Bond " ..	.. 34
XA	Willingham, Cambs : Screen ..	" " ..	.. 36
" B	Lynn, St. Nicholas : " ..	Francis Bond " ..	.. 36
" C	Barton, Cambs : " ..	F. Bligh Bond " ..	.. 36
" D	Castle Hedingham : " ..	" " ..	.. 36
XI A	Edlesborough, Bucks : " ..	" " ..	.. 38
" B	Mobberley, Cheshire : " ..	Fredk. Crossley " ..	.. 38
XII A	Halberton, Devon (panels) ..	" " ..	.. 40
" B	Southwold, Suffolk : " ..	F. Bligh Bond " ..	.. 40
" C	Mobberley, Cheshire " ..	Fredk. Crossley " ..	.. 40
XIII A	Charlton-on-Otmoor : Screen ..	Rev. W. F. B. Ward ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	.. 40
" B	Astbury, Cheshire : " ..	F. Crossley " ..	.. 42
XIV	Paignton : Stone screen ..	" ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	.. 44
XVA	Marwood, Devon : Screen ..	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	.. 46
" B	South Pool, Devon : " ..	Lent by R.I.B.A. ..	.. 46
XVI A	Wells Cathedral : Stone screen ..	F. Crossley ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	.. 48
" B	Paignton : Screen canopies ..	" " ..	.. 48
XVII A	Llanrwst : Tracery detail ..	" " ..	.. 52
" B	Carlisle : " (Renaissance) ..	" " ..	.. 52
XVIII A	Iconostasis of Pergamon ..	From an old engraving ..	.. 56
" B	" Magnesia ..	" " ..	.. 56
SECTION II			
XIX	Iconostasis of Kerfons, Brittany ..	Rev. T. Clark ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	.. 60
XXA	St. Fiacre : Roodloft ..	F. Bligh Bond " ..	.. 64
" B	Priziac : " ..	" " ..	.. 64
XXI A	Ravello Cathedral : Ambo ..	F. F. Fox, F.S.A. ..	.. 66
" B	San Lorenzo, Rome : " ..	" " ..	.. 66
XXII A	Palermo " ..	" " ..	.. 70
" B	Ravenna, S. Apollinare " ..	" " ..	.. 70
SECTION III			
XXIII A	Salerno : Ambo, N. side ..	F. F. Fox, F.S.A. ..	.. 72
" B	" " S. side ..	" " ..	.. 72

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATE	SUBJECT	AUTHOR'S NAME	PAGE
XXIV A	Florence, S. Miniato : Ambo .. ..	Rev. H. C. Bond, M.A. ( <i>photo</i> )	<i>facing</i> 76
" B	Aerschot : Pulpitum .. ..	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	" 76
XXV	Oberwesel : Jubé .. ..	Rev. Dr. Miller .. ..	" 80
XXVI A	Dennington, Suffolk : Galleries ..	F. Bligh Bond .. ..	" 82
" B	Llanegryn : Roodloft .. ..	" .. ..	" 82
XXVII A	Dartmouth : Roodscreen .. ..	F. F. Fox, F.S.A. .. ..	" 86
" B	Kenn : .. ..	" .. ..	" 86
XXVIII A	Ripon Cathedral : .. ..	Dom Bede Camm, O.S.B. ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	" 88
" B	Chichester : Arundel screen .. ..	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	" 88
XXIX A	Lierre : Jubé .. ..	————— .. ..	" 90
" B	Aerschot : .. ..	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	" 90
XXX A	St. Margaret's, Herefordshire : Roodloft	Alfred Watkins .. ..	" 94
" B	Llanfilo : Roodloft .. ..	————— .. ..	" 94

## SECTION IV

XXXI A	Patricio : Roodloft .. ..	Rev. H. Day, D.D. ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	" 98
" B	Llanwnnog : .. ..	Dr. G. Norman .. ..	" 98
XXXII A	Hubberholme : .. ..	F. F. Fox, F.S.A. .. ..	" 100
" B	Mere, Wilts : .. ..	" .. ..	" 100
XXXIII A	Llanrwst : .. ..	————— .. ..	" 102
" B	" .. ..	————— .. ..	" 102
XXXIV	Llanegryn : .. ..	Fletcher Moss .. ..	" 106
XXXV A	Kenton : .. ..	F. Crossley ( <i>photo</i> ) .. ..	" 110
" B	Atherington : .. ..	" .. ..	" 110
XXXVI A	Kenton : Detail of loft, cornices	————— .. ..	" 112
" B	Staverton : .. canopies in loft ..	————— .. ..	" 112
XXXVII	Atherington : Cornices .. ..	————— .. ..	" 114
XXXVIII	" Canopy work .. ..	————— .. ..	" 118
XXXIX A	Strensham : Roodloft .. ..	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>photo</i> ) .. ..	" 118
" B	Flamborough : .. ..	Rev. W. F. B. Ward ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	" 120

## PART II

PLATE	SUBJECT	AUTHOR'S NAME	PAGE
XL A	Lew Trenchard : Roodloft .. ..	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	<i>facing</i> 126
" B	Staverton : .. ..	————— .. ..	" 126
XL I A	Burghill : Double screen .. ..	————— .. ..	" 128
" P	Compton Bassett : Double screen ..	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	" 128
XL II A	Llanelieu : Rood and tympanum ..	————— .. ..	" 130
" B	Avebury : Roodloft .. ..	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	" 130
XL III A	Dauntsey : Tympanum with " Doom "	————— .. ..	" 132
" B	Wenhaston .. ..	From " <i>Archæologia</i> " .. ..	" 132
XL IV A	Conway : Roodscreen .. ..	Fredk. Crossley ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	" 134
" B	Montgomery : Roodloft .. ..	Dr. Geo. Norman .. ..	" 134
XL V	Sefton, Lancs : .. ..	From an old engraving ..	" 136
XL VI A	Lustleigh, Devon : Roodscreen ..	Fredk. Crossley ( <i>photo</i> ) ..	" 138
" B	Monkleigh, .. Parclose screen ..	" .. ..	" 138
XL VII A	Willand, Devon : Cornices .. ..	" .. ..	" 140
" B	Washfield, .. ..	" .. ..	" 140
XL VIII A	Croscombe : Chancel screen, 1616 ..	F. Bligh Bond .. ..	" 142
" B	Crowcombe : .. and pulpit, 1728 ..	" .. ..	" 142
XL IX A	Cruwys Morchard : Chancel screen,	————— .. ..	" 144
" B	temp. 1780 .. ..	" .. ..	" 144
" L	Ermington : Chancel screen .. ..	————— .. ..	" 144
LI A	Long Sutton, Som. : Organs, over screen	F. F. Fox, F.S.A. .. ..	" 146
LI B	Churchstanton : Gallery .. ..	G. Gillham ( <i>photo</i> ) .. ..	" 148
	Totnes : Gallery over screen .. ..	————— .. ..	" 148



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

xi

PLATE	SUBJECT	AUTHOR'S NAME	PAGE
LII	High Ham: Roodscreen .. ..	F. Bligh Bond .. ..	<i>facing</i> 150
LIIIA	Keynsham: Screen .. ..	" (photo) .. ..	152
" B	Quantoxhead, East: Screen .. ..	" .. ..	152
LIVA	Banwell: Cornices .. ..	Fredk. Crossley .. ..	154
" B	Fitzhead: " .. ..	F. Bligh Bond .. ..	154
LVA	Bridgwater: Screens .. ..	" .. ..	156
" B	" " Elizabethan .. ..	" .. ..	156
LVI	Congresbury: Roodscreen .. ..	Fredk. Crossley .. ..	160
LVII	Dunster: Parclose .. ..	J. Reginald H. Weaver (photo) .. ..	162
LVIII A	Bishop's Lydeard: Roodscreen .. ..	Fredk. Crossley (photo) .. ..	164
" B	Halse: Roodscreen .. ..	" .. ..	164
LIX	Long Sutton: Screen and pulpit .. ..	F. Bligh Bond .. ..	166
LX	Minchhead: Screen .. ..	F. F. Fox, F.S.A. .. ..	168
LXI	Norton Fitzwarren: Screen .. ..	" .. ..	170
LXII A	Ashchurch, Glos.: Screen .. ..	F. Bligh Bond (photo) .. ..	174
" B	Pilton: Screen .. ..	" .. ..	174
LXIII A	Wroughton: Roodscreen .. ..	Miss F. Cave (photo) .. ..	176
" B	Thorn St. Margaret's .. ..	Rev. T. W. Allen .. ..	176
" C	Ruishton (panels) .. ..	From photo lent by the Vicar .. ..	176
" D	Long Ashton .. ..	Miss F. Cave .. ..	176
" E	Whitchurch .. ..	F. Bligh Bond .. ..	176
LXIV A	Trull: Roodscreen .. ..	J. Reginald H. Weaver (photo) .. ..	178
" B	Timberscombe: Roodscreen .. ..	" .. ..	178
LXV A	Uffculme: Cornices .. ..	Fredk. Crossley (photo) .. ..	180
" B	Trent .. ..	" .. ..	180
LXVI A	High Ham: " .. ..	" .. ..	188
" B	Queen Camel: " .. ..	" .. ..	188
LXVII A	Banwell: " (showing large leaf) .. ..	" .. ..	190
" B	Atherington .. ..	" .. ..	190
LXVIII A	Pinhoe: " .. ..	" .. ..	194
" B	Kingsnympton: " .. ..	" .. ..	194
LXIX A	Gresford: Screen panels .. ..	" .. ..	200
" B	Trull: " .. ..	" .. ..	200

## PART I (FIGURES IN TEXT)

FIG.	SUBJECT	AUTHOR'S NAME	PAGE
1	The Jewish Tabernacle .. ..	" .. ..	4
2	Liturgical Veils in Rome .. ..	S. Baring Gould .. ..	5
3	" " in ivory in Lateran Museum .. ..	R. de Fleury .. ..	5
3A } 3B }	Liturgical Veils in mosaic (Bethlehem) .. ..	" .. ..	6
4	Church of Paullinus at Tyre .. ..	Bingham's "Antiquities" .. ..	7
5A	Oratory of Spoleto (V cent.): Plan .. ..	R. de Fleury .. ..	9
5B	St. Lawrence, Bradford-on-Avon: Plan .. ..	" .. ..	9
6	Tripartite plan of ancient churches .. ..	Bingham's "Antiquities" .. ..	10
A & B	(a) Dr. Beveridge; (b) Leo Allatius .. ..	" .. ..	10
7	Babouda (Aleppo): Plan of church .. ..	G. Gilbert Scott .. ..	11
8A	Brixworth: " .. ..	" .. ..	11
8B	South Elmham: " .. ..	" .. ..	11
9	Barton-on-Humber: " .. ..	" .. ..	12
10	St. Francis of Assisi: High screen .. ..	R. de Fleury .. ..	14
11A	Plan of early Basilican church .. ..	" .. ..	15
11B	" Roman house .. ..	" .. ..	15
12	" Church of St. Agnes: Catacombs .. ..	" .. ..	15
13	Spanish arrangement of choir .. ..	————— .. ..	17
14A	Screen and ambo: St. Sophia (plan) .. ..	R. de Fleury .. ..	19
14B	" " " (elevation) .. ..	" .. ..	20
15	Peterchurch Church: Plan .. ..	————— .. ..	23

FIG.	SUBJECT	AUTHOR'S NAME	PAGE
16A	Cheekenden, Oxon : Church plan	Buckler Collection	24
16B	Dunham Magna :	Prof. Baldwin Brown	24
16C	Birkin, Yorks :	Buckler Collection	24
16D	Dalmeny, N.B. :	MacGibbon and Ross	25
16E	Leuchars "	" " "	25
17	Birsay, Orkney :	" " "	25
18	Castle Rising :	Buckler Collection	26
19A	Sunninghill, Berks :	" "	26
19B	Brockley, Suffolk :	" "	26
20	Breamore :	" "	27
21	Hampnet :	" "	27
22	Tidmarsh :	" "	27
23	Church of St. Brigit, Kildare (conjectural plan)	—————	29
24	Three North British Churches	MacGibbon and Ross	29
25	Bradford-on-Avon : Church interior	—————	31
26	Rochester : Old Basilica, Plan	—————	32
27	Reculvers :	—————	33
28	St. Paneras, Canterbury :	Prof. Baldwin Brown	33
29	Dover Castle : Church	—————	34
30	Reculvers : Triple chancel arch	From an old print	34
31	Brixworth : Choir screen	—————	35
32	Sion (Georgia) : Sanctuary screen	R. de Fleury	35
33	Nola : Chancel partition	" "	36
34	" Plan and elevation	" "	36
35	Wool, Dorset : Chancel arcade	H. Heathman ( <i>delt.</i> )	37
36	Westwell, Kent :	" "	38
37	Capel-le-Ferne :	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>delt.</i> )	39
38	Welsh Newton :	H. Heathman	40
39	Little Hereford : Chancel wall	—————	41
40	La Martorana, Palermo :	—————	41
41	Brechin Cathedral : Chancel arch	—————	42
42A	Castle Rising	H. Heathman ( <i>delt.</i> )	43
42B	Melton Constable	F. Bligh Bond	43
43	Bramford, Suffolk : Triple stone screen	H. Heathman	44
44	Bottisham, Cambs :	" "	45
45	Triplow, Cambs : Screen	A. Mountain	46
46	Llangeitho, Card. :	F. Bligh Bond	47
47	St. Januarius, Naples : Screen	—————	47
48	Ashley, Hants : Mural screen	—————	48
49	Otterbourne :	—————	49
50	Baulking, Berks :	H. Heathman ( <i>delt.</i> )	50
51	Bracebridge, Lincs :	" "	50
52	Stockton, Wilts :	F. Bligh Bond	51
53	Curdworth, Warwick :	—————	52
54	Winterbourne Monckton, Wilts : Chancel arch	H. Heathman	52
55	Sandridge, Herts : Mural screen	—————	53
56	Highway, Wilts : Screen	H. Heathman ( <i>delt.</i> )	54
57	Scawton, Yorks :	" "	54
	Diagram Sheet A	H. Heathman ( <i>delt.</i> )	55
	" B	" "	56
	" C	" "	57
	" D	" "	58
SECTION II			
58A	Dorchester, Oxon : Screen	A. Mountain ( <i>delt.</i> )	60
58B	Northfleet, Kent :	—————	60
59	Ewerby, Lincs :	" Spring Gardens Sketch Book "	61
60	Leake	—————	62
61	Merton, Norfolk : Screen	Rev. G. W. Minns	63
62A	Cawston : Roodscreen	" Spring Gardens Sketch Book "	65
62B	" " (detail)	" "	67
63A	Moretonhampstead : Cornices	F. Bligh Bond ( <i>photo</i> )	69
63B	Newtown, Montgomery :	" "	69

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

xiii

## SECTION III

FIG.	SUBJECT	AUTHOR'S NAME	PAGE
64	Pavia, St. Michael: Ambo .. ..	—	76
65	Nantwich: Pulpit on screen .. ..	H. Heathman ( <i>delt.</i> ) .. ..	77
66	Lucca Cathedral: Rood or "Holy Face" ..	—	83
67	Gamlingay, Cambs.: Roodloft detail .. ..	—	91
68	Bettws Newydd: Roodloft, etc. .. ..	H. Heathman ( <i>delt.</i> ) .. ..	94

## SECTION IV

69	Gloucester Cathedral: "Doom" panel .. ..	From <i>Archæologia</i> .. ..	100
70	Taunton: Gallery over screen .. ..	H. Heathman ( <i>delt.</i> ) .. ..	108
71	Winchcombe, Glos.: Gallery over screen ..	" .. ..	109
72	Lockington, Leics.: Tympanum, temp. 1704 ..	" .. ..	110
73	Parracombe, Devon: Tympanum, c. 1780 ..	" .. ..	111
74	Bridestowe: Figure from Tympanum .. ..	" .. ..	111
75	" " "Resurrection" " .. ..	" .. ..	112
76	Rodney Stoke: Left over screen, 1625 ..	" .. ..	112
77	Sandon, Staffs.: " " " 1686 .. ..	" .. ..	113
78	Portishead: Minstrel Gallery .. ..	" .. ..	114
79	Croscombe: Screen detail .. ..	" .. ..	115
80	Low Ham, Som.: Chancel screen .. ..	" .. ..	116
81	Wickhamford: Chancel gates .. ..	" .. ..	119
82	Molland: Tympanum, 1808 .. ..	" .. ..	120
82A	Bray Almshouse: Screen, 1670 .. ..	( <i>Measd.</i> ) H. Dare Bryan .. ..	121

## PART II

FIG.	SUBJECT	AUTHOR'S NAME	PAGE
83	Pawlett: Roodscreen .. ..	( <i>Measd.</i> ) F. Bligh Bond .. ..	126
83A	" Details .. ..	" .. ..	127
84	Portbury: Screen .. ..	F. Bligh Bond .. ..	128
85	Kilmersdon: " .. ..	( <i>Measd.</i> ) C. F. Hansom .. ..	129
85A	" Details .. ..	" .. ..	130
86	Tracery heads of screens in N. Somerset ..	H. Heathman " .. ..	131
87	Tracery heads of screens in Atherington and Parracombe .. ..	" .. ..	132
88	Curry Rivel: Screen .. ..	" .. ..	135
89	Panels, Dunster: Screen .. ..	" .. ..	138
90	Elworthy: Screen .. ..	" .. ..	140
91	Brompton Ralph: Tracery head .. ..	" .. ..	142
92	Alford: Roodscreen .. ..	" .. ..	144
93	Backwell: Screen detail .. ..	( <i>Measd.</i> ) C. F. Hansom .. ..	145
94	Compton Martin .. ..	From sketch by the late J. Foster Wood, F.R.I.B.A. .. ..	157
95	Congresbury: Chapel screen .. ..	H. Heathman ( <i>delt.</i> ) .. ..	159
96	Culbone: " .. ..	" .. ..	163
97	Enmore: Roodscreen (now at Huish) .. ..	" .. ..	167
98	St. Audries: Screen .. ..	( <i>Measd.</i> ) F. Bligh Bond .. ..	186
99	Raddington: " .. ..	H. Heathman ( <i>delt.</i> ) .. ..	188
" A)	Staple Fitzpaine: Details .. ..	( <i>Measd.</i> ) F. Bligh Bond .. ..	192
" B)	Stockland Bristol: Screen .. ..	" .. ..	193
101	Otterhampton: Roodscreen .. ..	H. Heathman ( <i>delt.</i> ) .. ..	197
102	Winsham: " .. ..	" .. ..	201



# PART I

---

## A SURVEY OF ECCLESIASTICAL SCREENWORK FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD

---

SECTION I. EARLY SCREENWORK.

„ II. MEDIÆVAL SCREENWORK.

„ III. { THE ICONOSTASIS.  
THE ROODLOFT AND TYMPANUM.

„ IV. POST-REFORMATION SCREENWORK.



# ECCLESIASTICAL SCREENWORK

## SECTION I

### EARLY SCREENWORK

§ 1. **M**ODERN Archæology is learning to read in the stones of the ancient temples of Christianity a trustworthy record of her origins. In the plan and arrangement, detail and equipment of these ancient buildings, we can discern the sure landmarks of traditional usage, the faithful reflection of the spirit and influence of different epochs, their cults and customs—the rise and fall of dynasties, the modification of social conditions, and the ebb and flow of religious activities.

To trace the play of hereditary influences beneath successive developments of dogmatic theology, ritual, and religious custom is a fascinating study, and in this we find an analysis of the structure and features of churches an invaluable help.

Some of these features, though modified in the course of the centuries, still bear the marks of a most remote ancestry. Others there are to which it is difficult to ascribe anything more than a mediæval origin. It is those of the former kind that must always possess for us the primary value, the more vital and enduring interest : and of this order one feature, the Chancel Screen, stands pre-eminent in its universality and in the antiquity of its use. Even in pre-Christian times we can trace its parallels, most notably in the Jewish Tabernacle or Synagogue. Other influences—Greek, Roman, Saracen,—pagan cult and secular use, have left their vestiges upon the ancient temples of our worship, and have modified their development, chiefly through the conversion of older buildings to the new religious uses. In the “ oracle ” of the pagan temple and the “ tablinum ” of the Roman house may be discerned the germ of that symbolic or sacred enclosure which every Christian church contains.

But it is when we come to compare the essential features of the Christian structures with those of the Hebrew worship that we find the most striking similarity manifested. And this is, perhaps, scarcely a matter for surprise, when we reflect on the circumstance that the Gospel, first preached in Jerusalem, reached the pagan world through the medium of the Jewish communities of the Roman Empire, and after the establishment of the original hierarchy at Jerusalem, local ecclesiastical bodies were organised on the model furnished by the Jewish communities.

The synagogue worship of the Jews, with its liturgical readings of Scripture, provided

a groundwork upon which the form of early Christian worship was based.<sup>1</sup> The Tabernacle, the Holy of Holies, or innermost Sanctuary, was divided by a veil from the "Holy Place," the part occupied by the priesthood, who in their turn were similarly screened from the laity in the outer court. There were thus three primary divisions, allocated respectively to the People, the Priesthood, and the Sacred Mysteries (Fig. 1). The veils were woven of four colours, azure, purple, scarlet, and white, and were richly embroidered and adorned with figures of cherubim. They were attached to a supporting

framework of pillars and architrave. These Jewish veils were drawn across the openings, thus forming a visible separation of a symbolic nature.

In the earliest detailed accounts we possess of Christian churches, we find that it was customary to build them with certain internal partitions or barriers dividing the buildings into several distinct areas, each set apart for its particular use in a manner comparable to that of the Jewish Tabernacle or Temple. These divisions were primarily three in number and their separation was effected by screens or veils. These veils, like the Jewish veil, had a symbolic aspect. When, at the hour of the Crucifixion, the veil of the Temple was rent asunder, this event received its symbolic interpretation, in the sense that a direct avenue was now revealed between the soul of man and his God, and the way was open to all. Thus in the use of the veil, as we find it perpetuated in the early Christian Church, there is this modified symbolism, and the veil, although

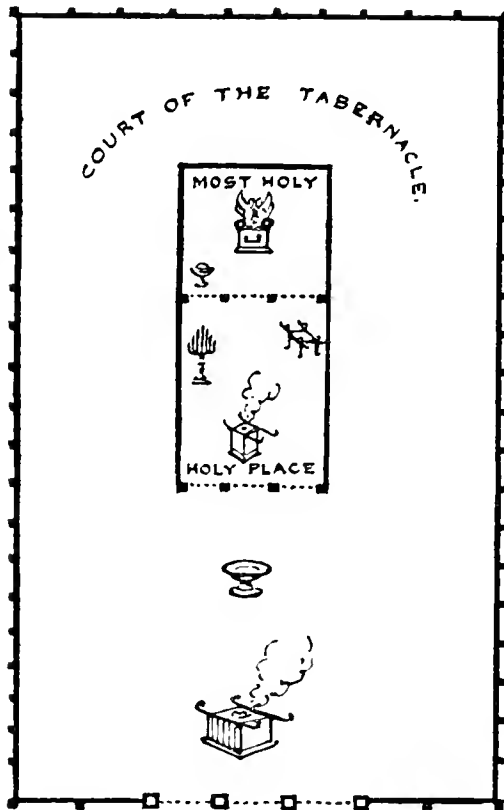


FIG. 1

still suggestive of a barrier (that of physical death) was not stretched permanently before the Sanctuary, but was parted down the middle, to allow of its being withdrawn at certain times, thus suggesting the idea of a spiritual unity.

<sup>1</sup> A daughter church, however antagonistic to its parent body, is likely to retain in some measure its forms of worship. Habit is a second nature, and no degree of antagonism would have operated in this case to prevent so natural a derivation of the habitual forms. The process would be a purely unconscious one, and, in the absence of any alternative model, inevitable.

Moreover, it is difficult to see on the one hand how any measure of antagonism on the Jewish side could affect Christian ceremonial; whilst on the other, it is scarcely conceivable that the early Christians would be of so intolerant a spirit as wilfully to discard any useful form or system not in itself inherently opposed to the principles of their religion.

Conscious imitation is another matter, and it was reserved for the Church of the seventh century to initiate a Judaising movement in ceremonial of an intentional nature.



§2. One of the earliest hints of the existence of regular buildings for Christian worship occurs in the writings of Eusebius<sup>1</sup> when he speaks of the “*σεμνεία*” used by Egyptian Christians from the days of Saint Mark.

But a more definite testimony is afforded by Clement, who, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, written at the close of the first century, speaks of “appropriate places, ordained of God” (*i.e.*,

consecrated to God) being provided, wherein “all things might be done religiously and in order.”

In the second century evidences begin to accumulate, and in the third they become numerous and definite. St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, who flourished about the middle of the third century, built several churches in Neocaesarea and Pontus,<sup>2</sup> which were divided internally into different parts, allocated to the various classes of worshippers.

In the year 1888 there was exhumed in Rome the house of SS. John and Paul, Chamberlains to Constantia, daughter of Constantine, presenting the unique instance



FIG. 2

of a house of a Roman Christian in Imperial times. On the walls are paintings, believed to date from the fourth century. A sketch of one of these is here reproduced (Fig. 2). It represents the deacons withdrawing the veils as the celebrant enters the Sanctuary.

But perhaps an even earlier illustration of the Christian veil in combination with screenwork is to be seen in an illustration given by de Fleury, of which a slight sketch is here given (Fig. 3). Representations in mosaic, symbolising the churches of Asia, which are preserved in the church at Bethlehem, show veils in a similar position (3A and B).

The veil is mentioned also by some early Greek writers. Athanasius,<sup>3</sup> writing in the fourth century, speaks of “the veil of the church”; Synesius<sup>4</sup> of the

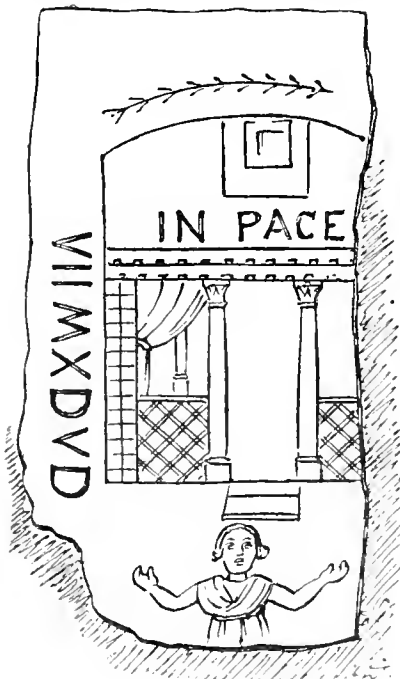


FIG. 3

<sup>1</sup> Euseb. lib. ii, c. xvii.

<sup>2</sup> Gregory Nyssen's "Life of Gregor: Thaumaturgus" (Paris, 1638, t. iii, p. 567, c. 4).

<sup>3</sup> "History of Arians," Chap. 56.

<sup>4</sup> Epistle 67 (early fifth century).

"mystical veil"; whilst Chrysostom and Evagrius<sup>1</sup> call the veils "amphithura," from their parting down the centre. They were sometimes richly adorned with gold, as was that which Chosroes gave to the Church of Antioch (Evagrius).

Their symbolic meaning and ritual use is indicated by Chrysostom in the following passage :—"When the sacrifice is brought forth . . . when you see the veils withdrawn, then think you see the heaven opened, and the angels descending from above."<sup>2</sup>

The liturgy of the Armenian Church, which is derived from Constantinople, and which represents in certain respects an ancient stage of the development of the Byzantine liturgy, retains the ritual use of the veil.

Duchesne shows how in the Gallican Liturgy, which was akin to the Liturgy of the Celtic Church in these islands, the "Prayer of the Veil" had its place ("Christian Worship," pp. 85 and 206).<sup>3</sup>

In the Armenian Church, this use of the veil is perpetuated to the present day. It also appears to have survived in the Ethiopian Church. Bruce, writing in 1770, speaks of the veils as being in regular use in the Abyssinian churches.

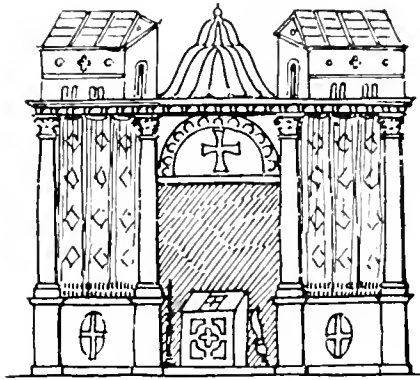


FIG. 3A

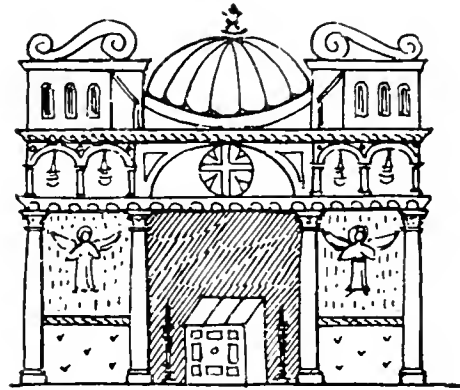


FIG. 3B

We find early mention of veils before church doors. St. Paullinus of Nola<sup>4</sup> and St. Jerome speak of these. They were sometimes adorned with imagery, but this was disapproved of in some places, as appears from the writings of Epiphanius, who, speaking of a church at Anablatta in Palestine, says he found a veil there which he tore in pieces as it bore the image of Christ or of some saint contrary to rule. He therefore ordered the guardians of the church to bury some poor man in it, and gave them a plain one instead.

<sup>1</sup> The period covered by the works of this historian is 431-593 A.D.

<sup>2</sup> In regard to what is known as the "Prayer of the Veil," the Rev. F. E. Brightman says that in the sense of a prayer *at* the sanctuary veil or in relation to it, it is exclusively Egyptian, but in the sense of a prayer at the lifting of the veil it is much more widespread—in a manner universal—only it is not so called, except in Syria, and it has nothing to do with the Egyptian prayer and occurs in quite a different place in the rite. In the Liturgy of the Coptic Jacobites the prayer comes at the beginning of the "Mass of the Faithful" (Brightman, "Liturgies Eastern and Western," p. 158). In the Liturgy of St. James it occurs just before the Anaphora (*ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 48).

<sup>3</sup> He considers that the Gallican Liturgy bears internal evidence of an origin no earlier, at earliest, than the middle of the fourth century.

<sup>4</sup> Poema XIV de S. Felici. Carm. iii, line 98.

## KEY TO NUMBERING ON FIG. 4

1. Propylæum or Vestibulum Magnum—the Great Porch into the Area before the Church.
2. The Atrium or Area.
3. Cantharus, or Fountain of Water.
4. Porticos or Cloisters, otherwise called the exterior narthex.
5. The Great Gate into the Church.
6. The two lesser Gates.
7. The Northern and Southern Gates.
8. Northern and Southern Nartheces or Cloisters.
9. The Ferula, or Interior Narthex—the place of the Catechumens.
10. The place of the Substrati, behind the Ambo.
11. The Ambo, or Reading Desk.
12. The stairs to same, on both sides.
13. The interior divisions allocated to men, within the range of pillars upon the ground floor.
14. Position of the upper galleries for women (denoted by the lesser pillars).
15. The Cancelli Bematis, or Rails of the Sanctuary.
16. The Bema, or Sanctuary.
17. The Altar.
18. The Pyrgus or Ciborium (arched canopy around and over the altar).
19. The Bishop's Throne.
20. The Presbyters' Thrones.

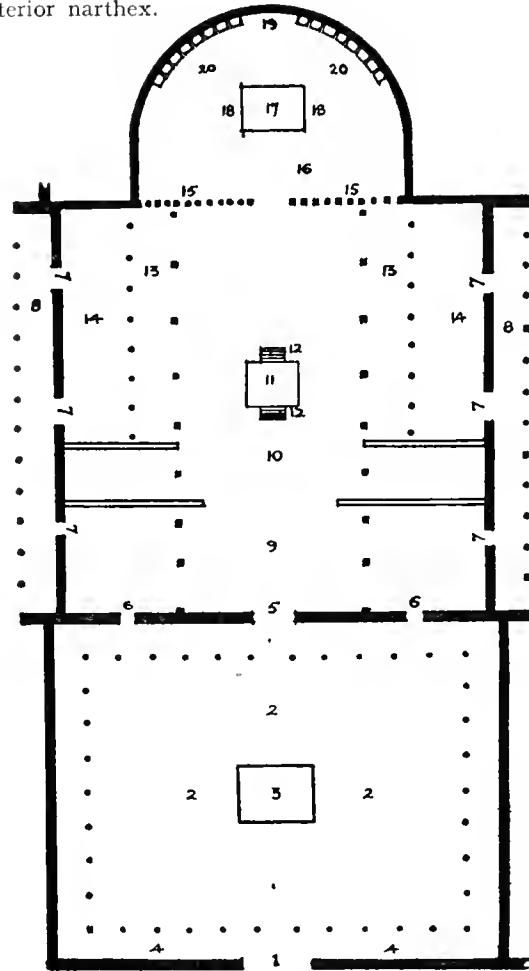


FIG. 4

DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCH OF PAULLINUS  
AT TYRE FOLLOWING THE DESCRIPTION  
OF EUSEBIUS (LIB. X. C. 1V)

It seems clear, then, that the symbolic or ritual use of veils was well nigh universal in the primitive church, and was esteemed of great importance. Veils remained in use until long after the days of Constantine, often in the form of tapestry or a curtain, but by degrees regular screenwork took their place. At first, it is probable, the veil pure and simple formed the barrier—*plus* such framework or pillars as may have been necessary for its support.

§ 3. The veils, having a primitive liturgical use, would appear to have been introduced into the West in very early times, and were probably three in number, as Durandus tells us, but as to the precise disposition of these veils in the churches of the Celtic and Saxon days we have no very definite data.

Until the ninth century sanctuaries were small, and there was no elevation of the Host at the Consecration until the eleventh century. But with the great changes in liturgy and ritual which then ensued came a gradual alteration in the structure of the

churches, and in the use of the veil, which was then restricted to the season of Lent, being dropped upon the evening before the first Sunday of Lent until the Thursday before Easter. During this period it was withdrawn only at the time the Gospel was being read.<sup>1</sup> Its use in this manner continued until the Reformation, when it disappeared, the only trace of this feature surviving till modern days being the close-boarded partition which in some churches had, long before the Reformation, been added, either as an accessory or a substitute, in the tympanum of the chancel arch. The Lenten Veil, or Velum Quadragesimale, was thus a feature of English Catholic worship from the twelfth to the sixteenth century. We hear of it even in the time of King Alfred. It is even now in use among the Cistercians in England, *e.g.*, at Mount Saint Bernard's in Leicestershire.

Until some time in the twelfth century, the sanctuary in English churches had been very restricted in size, being used by the celebrant and his one or two assistants alone; the other clerics, or choir, being in the part of the nave nearest the sanctuary arch. But with this period came the general enlargement of the chancels and the inclusion of the choir within their limits. The sanctuary veil, now a Lenten veil, was placed further east in the form of a great curtain or sheet of painted or dyed linen, stretched across the chancel upon a beam or other support, in such a manner as to hide the altar and its surroundings completely. The outer veil, that which hung between the clergy in the choir, and the laity in the nave,<sup>2</sup> was also retained, and some of our churches still exhibit the hooks provided over the chancel arch for its suspension.

Durandus, writing in the thirteenth century, says: "It is to be noted that a triple series of veils hangs in a church—that is to say, the veil which shrouds the holy elements, that which divides the sanctuary from the clerks, and that which hides them from the people."<sup>3</sup>

This last takes the same position as that outer arcade which in certain Saxon churches supplies a structural division between nave and choir (as Brixworth). Durandus, who died in 1296, makes no mention of screenwork.

<sup>1</sup> W. H. Frere, *The Use of Sarum*, Vol. I, Cambridge, 1898.

<sup>2</sup> Such veil is mentioned in an ancient Anglo-Saxon Pontifical as being used in the Rite of Consecration of a church (ex. MS. Pontificali Anglicano Monasterii Gemmeticensis: Annorum 900). Martène. Lib. II. Cap. xiii. Ord. iii. col. 708 (ed. 1736, Antwerp).

"Suscipit (episcopus) ipsas reliquias a presbytero, et portet eas cum letania super altare novum, *extenso velo inter eos et populum*," &c., &c.

Also ib. Ord. ix. (col. 753) ex. M.S. Pontificali Halinardi Arch. Lugdunensis ante anno 600). (Ordo in ded. eccl. sicut antiquitus apostolica docuit traditio et quomodo Romana gerit ecclesia), and several others.

<sup>3</sup> "Notandum est quod triplex genus veli suspenditur in ecclesia videlicet quod sacra operit, quod sanctuarium a clero dividit, et quod clerum a populo secernit" (Durandus, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, Lib. I, Cap. iii, n. 34).

§ 4. In the early churches we find, in addition to the outward enclosure, or forecourt,<sup>1</sup> the three following strongly-marked divisions :

- (1) The Narthex, Pro-naos, or outward nave, in which stood the penitents and catechumens.
- (2) The Naos, or Choir-nave, wherein the church communicants had their respective places, and which contained the place for the deacons and canonical singers.
- (3) The Bema, or Sanctuary, containing the seats for the priesthood or superior clergy.

The earlier form of narthex was that of a somewhat narrow rectangular enclosure, whence it was termed by the Latins *ferula* (rod, or staff), the Greek word *narthex* implying an oblong figure. Where churches had porticos attached to them (as had the church of Paullinus of Tyre, described by Eusebius, where the porticos adjoined on north and south), these also were termed *nartheces*, but in such churches as had no porticos adjoining to them, the *narthex* was the lower part of the church within the walls, and this was made to answer the use of porticos in other churches, viz., for penitents.

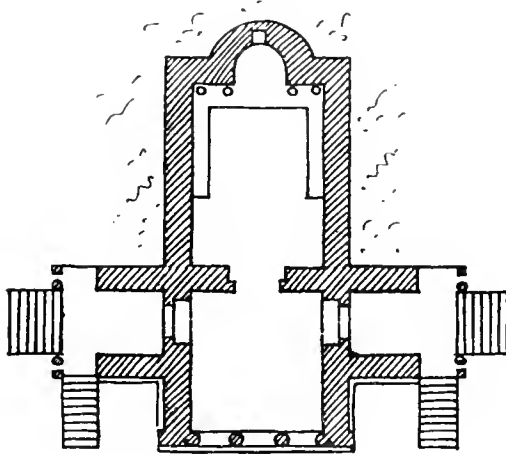


FIG. 5A

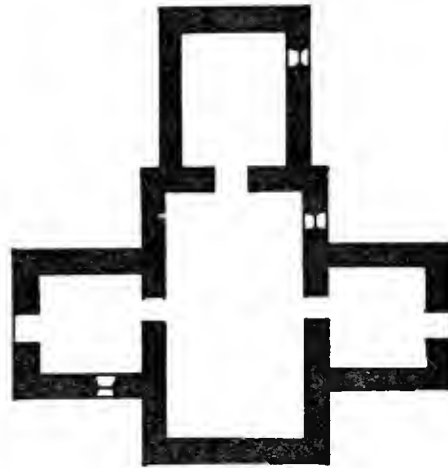


FIG. 5B

The entrance into the *narthex* of the church of Paullinus, from the outward ante-temple, was by three doorways, containing gates, the middle one being the highest of the three (Fig. 4, Nos. 5 and 6). Paullinus, Bishop of Nola, describes these doorways or porches as being arched, whence they were called by the name "arcus," or, for the same reason, "apsides" (denoting a convex form).<sup>2</sup>

These find a later parallel in the great western portals of the larger mediæval churches ; and the alternative form, that in which north and south porticos take the place of the single narthex, we are familiar with in the smaller churches. We give an illustration of such a church in Greece, namely, the Christian Oratory of Spoleto, near Athens, a building

<sup>1</sup> A walled court, open to the air, constituting an ante-temple to the early churches. In the middle of this stood the fountain or cistern, symbol of purification.

<sup>2</sup> Epist. xii, ad Sever : "*Alma domus triplici patet ingredientibus arcu.*"

of the fifth century (Fig. 5A). Compare with this the plan of our own little church of St. Lawrence at Bradford-on-Avon, of the eighth century (Fig. 5B).

After the narthex comes the nave proper (Naos). This, in the earliest churches, was entered from the narthex by the gates which the modern rituals and Greek writers call *πύλαι βασιλικαὶ*—the royal, or beautiful gates. In the case of the Tyrian Church, described by Eusebius, the actual separation was effected by certain rails of wood. There seems to be a disposition on the part of several writers on this subject to regard these nave portals as three in number, like those admitting to the narthex.

We show a diagram taken from Bingham, embodying his idea of the plan of the church according to the description given by Eusebius (Fig. 4). Here we note the narthex communicates with the nave by three openings. The same arrangement is suggested in the other two accompanying diagrams (Figs. 6A and 6B), given by Schelstrate<sup>1</sup>, of which the first is taken from Dr. Beveridge's "Pandects"—the second from Leo Allatius, both being of interest as giving the ideas of seventeenth century writers upon this point.

In each case the triplicity of the openings from the narthex to the nave is to be noted. The ground plan of the church of Babouda, near Aleppo<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 7), believed to date from the fourth century, shows a colonnade with triple opening to the narthex, and the narthex (structurally united with the nave) with the customary three openings.

<sup>1</sup> Concilium Antiochenum (Antwerp, 1681).

<sup>2</sup> Vogüé: Syrie Centrale, etc. (Baudry, Paris, 1877).

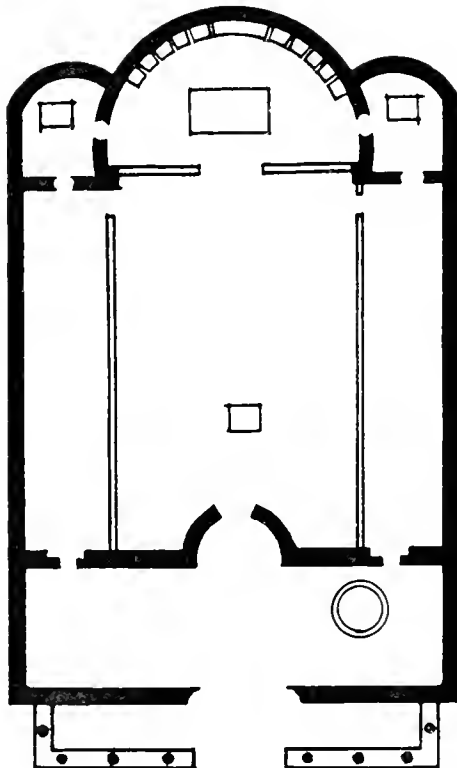


FIG. 6A

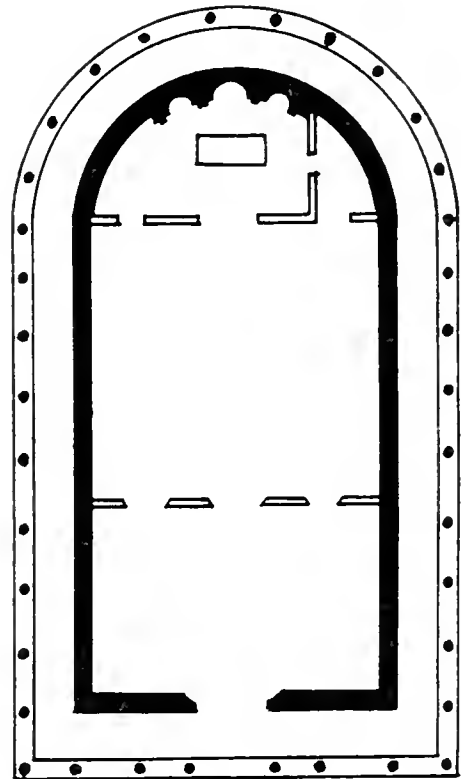


FIG. 6B

This plan possesses a special degree of interest to English ecclesiologists in view of its curious correspondence with certain church-building forms known in Saxon

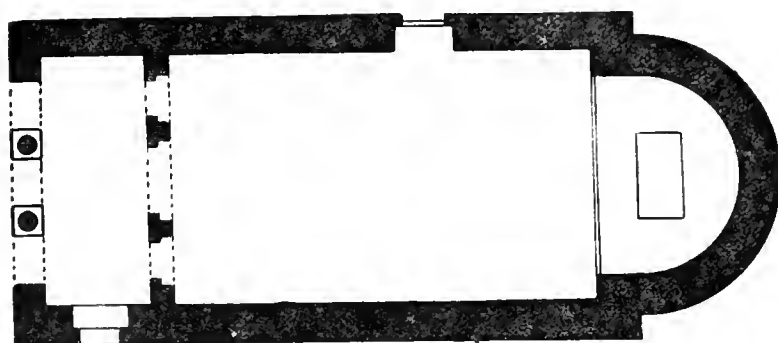


FIG. 7

England, to which we shall have occasion to allude more particularly later. For the moment it will suffice to draw attention to the very marked structural union which is here visible between narthex and nave—so much so that they

are practically one, and the "royal gates" have become a purely internal feature, or species of screen.

This development seems paralleled in some instances alluded to by Francis Bond in

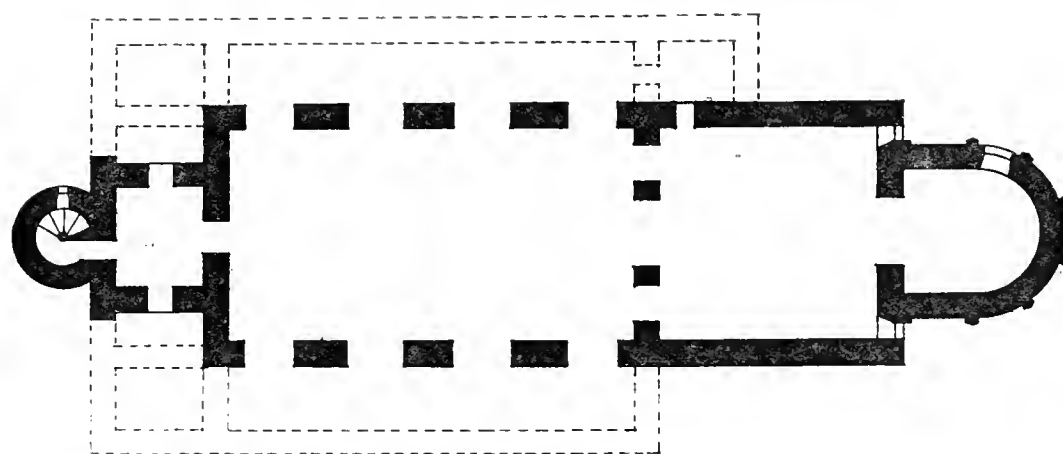


FIG. 8A

his work on Gothic Architecture, wherein he mentions that in the Burgundian churches the narthex was developed into a great ante-church—this being the case at Gannat and at the Benedictine Abbey of Fleury (1062), etc. Our own long Benedictine naves he considers a parallel—and thinks their western bays may have been used as a narthex.

In our own country the plans of Brixworth (Fig. 8A) or South Elmham churches (Fig. 8B) appear to bear out most strongly the same idea, and in this connection it is interesting to compare

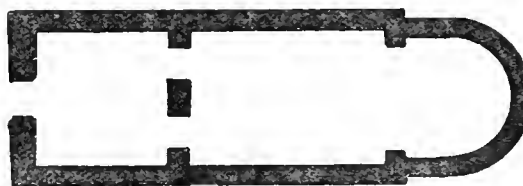


FIG. 8B

also such plans as that of the original churches of the Barton-on-Humber type, as given by Professor Baldwin Brown (Fig. 9), where the narthex takes the form of a

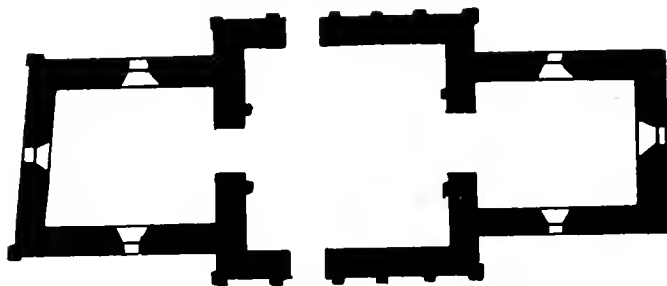


FIG. 9

“fore-building” jutting from the square nave on the west, as the sanctuary does on the east.

§ 5. The rails of wood separating the narthex from the nave had probably at first a practical rather than a symbolic function; and in this respect were like those

door-veils or curtains which were the earlier counterpart of the modern doors of wood.

A spirit of intense reverence characterised the services of the early church. Differences of position, degrees of privilege and of advancement, were very strictly observed, and the unauthorised were not allowed to transgress the barriers, as such transgressions would have been regarded as profane. The divisions were therefore protected by the wooden barriers mentioned.

Such rails constituted the earliest and simplest order of screenwork, and may be regarded as a feature of parallel use with the veil, becoming of increasing importance as the time went on, whilst the use of the veil, except in certain special positions, tended to diminish.<sup>1</sup> This process of gradual substitution of the screen for the veil would be the natural outcome of its real efficiency as a barrier, and its relative advantage of stability and permanence.

It is easy to see how the constructional screen once introduced would infallibly grow in popularity, and eventually for all the more practical purposes of its employment, supplant the veil.

§ 6. The third and innermost part of the ancient churches was the sanctuary, spoken of by early writers as the Bema (Gr. *βῆμα* = tribunal), containing the seats of the presbyters, and the altar. This again was screened from the nave, and we know also from early writers that veils were usual in this part.<sup>2</sup>

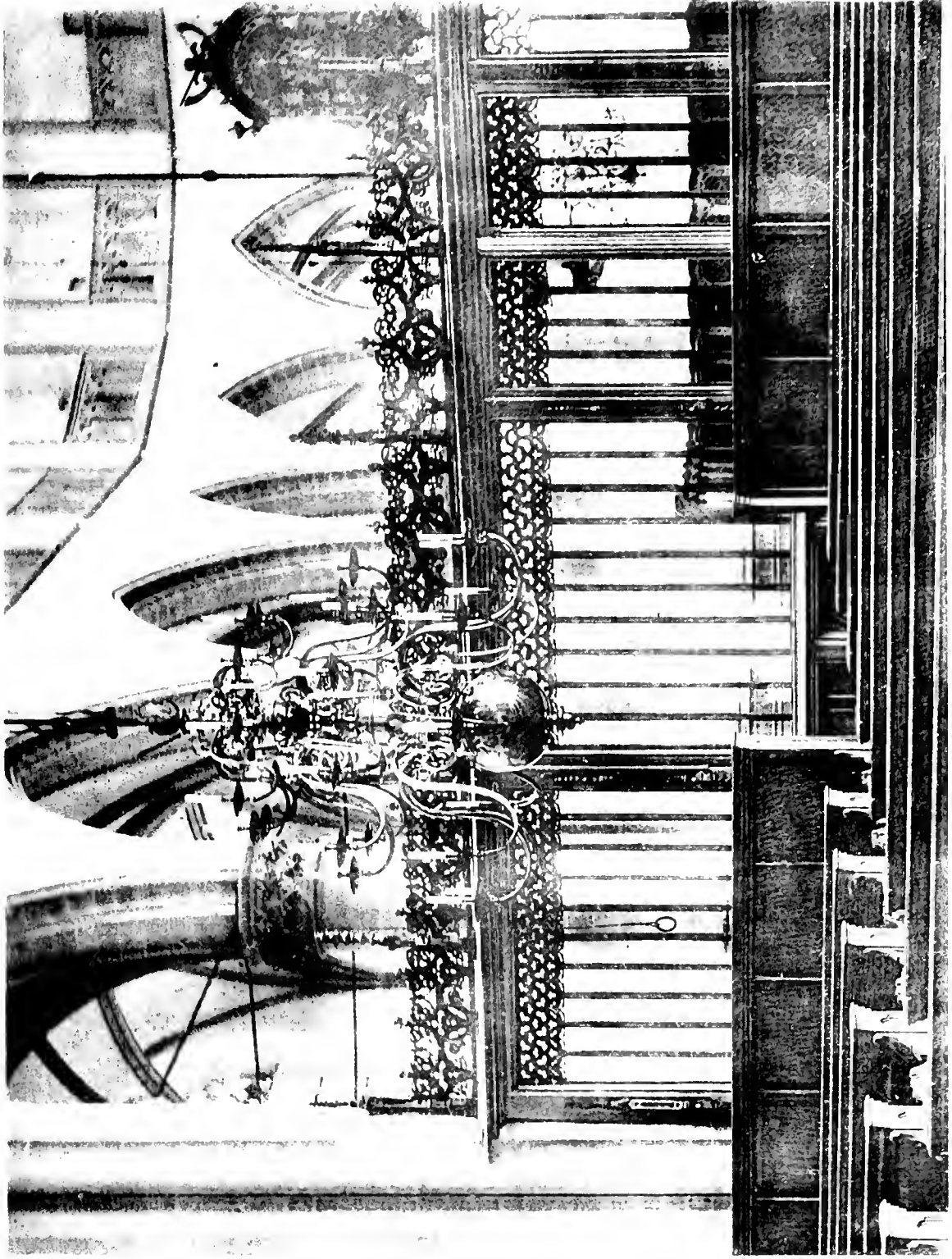
The first sanctuary screens were simply colonnades with a horizontal beam or architrave laid across the heads of the columns, forming a framework on which the veils were hung.

<sup>1</sup> It may reasonably be held that the framework of a screen would furnish the requisite means of support for a veil; the beam traversing the head being used for the hooks or other means of attachment.

<sup>2</sup> Athanasius calls them “*βῆλα τῆς ἐκκλησίας*,” “the hangings of the church,” and Synesius speaks of them as “*καταπέτασμα μυστικόν*”—the mystical veils. These, he says, also, are those referred to by Chrysostom and Evagrius, as “*ἀμφιθύρα*,” from their opening down the middle as “folding-doors.”



PLATE II  
ILLUSTRATION OF CANCELLI



CHANCEL SCREEN IN BRONZE: ALKMAAR, HOLLAND



R. de Fleury, in his illustrated work, "*La Messe*" (vol. iii, pp. 105 *et seq.*), gives a very ample list of these early screens. One very valuable example, which he believes to date from the third century, shows a wall supported by columns with three intercolumniations—the central one being rather the largest, the two side ones being provided with veils or curtains, and low screens or "*cancelli*" of lattice work. Steps lie at the entrance, and a praying figure in the foreground extends its arms, symbolising the assembly of the faithful (Fig. 3 *ante*).

It is curious how precisely this arrangement of the veil and the four pillars tallies with its pre-Christian counterpart in the Tabernacle of the Jews, as described in Exodus xxvi, 31, 32.

In subsequent times the beam becomes the support for other features, such as vases, candle-holders, or images, and is thus the prototype of the "*Iconostasis*," the name by which the Image-bearing screen of the Eastern churches (the original of our western gallery fronts, with their panel paintings or statuary) is designated.<sup>1</sup>

§ 7. But at least as early as the fourth century, and probably earlier, another variety of screenwork—not a frame to hold a veil, but a substitute for the veil itself—is found in the "*Cancelli*," or lattices, which, as the little illustrations reproduced from De Fleury (pp. 5, 14) indicate, now began to be used as a barrier between the several divisions of the church.

Early mention of these "*Cancelli*" occurs in a sermon preached at the dedication of Paullinus' Basilica at Tyre, on the building of churches, addressed to Paullinus by Eusebius, Bishop of Tyre (*circa* 315 A.D.), in which the cathedral of that city (then the most noble Christian structure) is described, and the screens are alluded to as follows :

"For when (the builder) had thus completed the Temple, "he also adorned it with lofty thrones, in honour of those who preside, and also with benches decently arranged in order throughout the whole, and at last placed the altar in the middle, and that this again might be inaccessible to the multitude, he enclosed these with lattice work of wood, accurately wrought with ingenious sculpture to present an admirable sight to the beholders."

These screens of lattice work, which contrived to furnish a real barrier to the progress of unauthorised persons, were called by the Latins "*Cancelli*," whence our word "*chancel*."

§ 8. The *cancelli* were at first of wood—probably they often took the form of balusters—and from being a mere structural convenience, seem to have speedily become a feature of great comeliness, calculated to display the finest qualities of artificers' work. They were without doubt the prototype of all the exquisite tracery-work which adorns the openings in our mediæval screens.

Italy furnishes us with many instances of early *cancelli*. Metal, or marble, was soon substituted for wood, and in these more permanent materials the feature took on a splendid development.

<sup>1</sup> The word implies a "picture stand."

At Torcello, in the screen which dates from early in the eleventh century, the spaces between the three columns on each side of the central opening are filled breast-high with superb marble tablets, gloriously sculptured. In the ninth century, which brought a great increase in the richness of ornamentation and furniture of churches, the Church of St. Sabina, built by Pope Eugenius II (A.D. 824), had a screen of marble slabs, on which stood a superstructure of columns. The Church of St. Martino-al-Monti is said by Ugonio to have been furnished by Pope Adrian with marble cancelli separating the choir from the nave (De Fleury).<sup>1</sup>

Early mention is made of metal cancelli. The screen of the Church of the Apostles at Constantinople was a lattice of gilt brass. In Ciampini's work on Ancient Monuments are plates of some of the altars which stood in old St. Peter's Church at Rome, and these are enclosed by brass screens. An instance of a high sanctuary screen of early date is here reproduced from De Fleury (Fig. 10). It is that of the Church of St. Francis

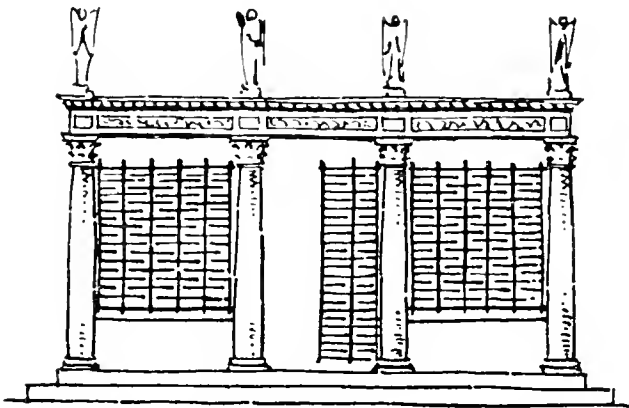


FIG. 10

at Assisi, and it shows to what an extent in size and elaboration this metal trellising was brought. All over the Continent are found traces of metal screenwork. Spain has some glorious examples of mediæval date and the continuance of the use of finely wrought metal grilles for purpose of cancelli is well seen in northern Europe. In the Low Countries, for instance, are some splendid examples of chancel screens in wrought and chased brass or bronze—these are often retained in the Protestantised

churches of Holland. One or two very fine ones of the sixteenth century survive in Amsterdam. We give an illustration of one remaining at Alkmaar (Plate II).

Metal cancelli are a persistent feature in Italy also throughout the mediæval period. In England we cannot trace the use of metal grilles or screens for this particular purpose, save in very rare instances, and we doubt whether such a thing as metal cancelli to the roodscreen of pre-Reformation date exist, or have ever existed, in this country.<sup>2</sup> The genius of the English preferred wood as a material for artistic development, and the demand for "cancelli" was met in the rich profusion of tracery work with which our

<sup>1</sup> At present the choir is enclosed by columns between which are grilles of wood.

<sup>2</sup> The question of climate seems involved. In southern countries the brilliancy of the sunlight, and the heat, favoured the development of dim, dark sanctuaries, in which a high altar screen often takes the place of an East window. This arrangement demands a translucent screen. Hence the choice of metal, rather than wood or stone.

But in northern climes, where the lack of sunlight has caused the development of large windows, the sanctuary is brilliantly lit, and the East window attains large proportions. Here the heavier wooden or stone screenwork is preferred, as tending to subdue the otherwise painful glare of the windows, and to mitigate the baldness of an otherwise cold or harsh interior.

screens began to be adorned as soon as the art of woodcraft had sufficiently advanced to make this possible. The delicacy and complexity of form assumed by the traceried cancelli of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is remarkable, and its variety and beauty constitute one of the great attractions of this work to the modern student. With us the presence of the cancelli is harmonised with the arcaded form of screen, and subordinated to this dominant feature, for the arcade, whether triple or multiple, is characteristic of English screenwork.

§ 9. The Church in Rome exhibits in its earliest ecclesiastical structures a similarity to those of the primitive Oriental church, but these are somewhat modified by ideas borrowed from local building customs—the Roman house (Fig. 11A and B), with its *atrium* and *tablinum* (answering to nave and sanctuary), and the *schola* or guild room, usually an oblong building with an apsidal recess at one end, around which sat the presidents of the guild, whilst a small altar stood in front for libations and incense.

Of the latter type is the little church in the catacomb of St. Agnes, of which a diagram is here given (Fig. 12). But the third and principal factor in the modification of church-building types in Rome is the Basilica, a type which has influenced the works of all succeeding generations.

When Christianity was first publicly adopted and patronised by the leading Roman citizens the “basilicas” or halls of the nobility were employed for the new worship, and we begin to find a “basilican” type of church developed on the lines already described—exhibiting the three principal divisions of *narthex*, *nave*, and *sanctuary* (the choir being included in the nave).

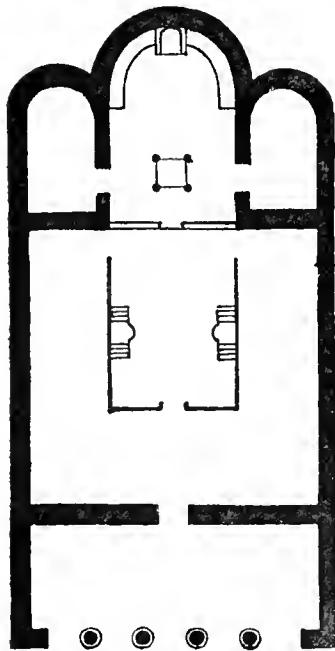


FIG. 11A

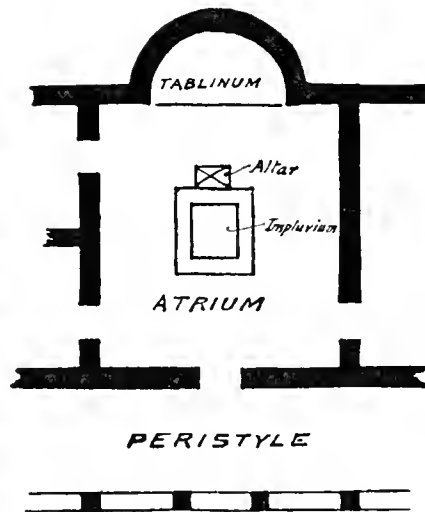


FIG. 11B

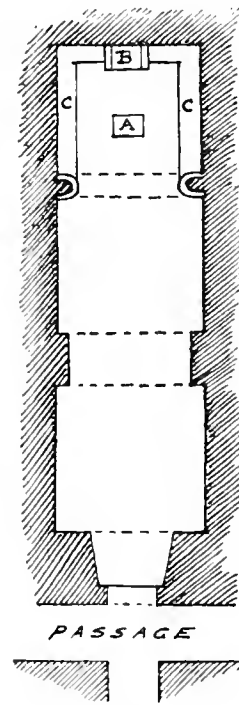


FIG. 12

But the nave in churches of the Basilican type was a section much more important than the square middle part of a church described by ancient writers.<sup>1</sup> It speedily became greatly magnified, and developed spacious aisles, and later on transepts also.

The narthex, on the other hand, tended to become a purely external feature, or cloister, and ceased to appear as a part of the church itself, since the enclosure of the choir within a limited area in the nave permitted the free use of the surrounding space for the laity, and no further division of the church was required for the purpose of orderly worship. Thus the Basilican type of church, as developed in Italy, shows no longer a tripartite character, but consists of two principal divisions only, viz., *nave* (containing choir) and *sanctuary*.<sup>2</sup>

Thus the description given by Durandus of the triple series of veils or walls usual in a church does not apply to the Basilican church in its structural aspect, although it does apply to all those churches which, following another tradition, have retained the narthex as a primary feature, incorporating it with the body of the church for use as a nave, that is, to accommodate the laity.

In place of the missing narthex, we find in the Basilicas an increased importance is given to another division of a purely internal nature, formed, island-fashion, within the nave itself—namely the choir enclosure, with its low wall of stone or marble—but this does not in any way correspond to the original division of *nave* and *narthex* lost sight of in the later basilicas.

The point to be borne in mind in contrasting the Basilican system of screenwork with the original or, as we may term it, Oriental, tradition which the church builders of Gaul and Britain tended to follow, is therefore that whilst the Italian model retain, no transverse division of the body of the church, we, in the West, have perpetuated this feature, and have elevated it, as will be shown, into a position of first-rate importance as the principal division of the church. For such indeed is the nature of our own mediæval structures, wherein the chancel arch is *not* the representative of the sanctuary divisions, but of the ancient choral limit<sup>3</sup>—the sanctuary threshold being marked by a difference in level, and sometimes by a beam or sanctuary screen, with the veil in mediæval days—the traditional landmark being perpetuated in our own days by the position of the Communion rails which have become customary in all our churches, however Protestantised they may be. What, therefore, was originally the narthex becomes enlarged into a nave *minus* choir, whilst that which had been a nave, including choir, becomes a choir pure and simple, and is structurally divided from the nave, and formed into a chancel in union with the sanctuary.

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Theodosius and Valentinian (Cod. Theod. lib. ix, tit. xlv).

<sup>2</sup> The derivation of the Basilican churches from the civil Basilicas, and the striking analogies between their parts and arrangements, are the subject of a highly interesting passage in the "History of Incense," by Cuthbert Atchley, Pt. II, Chap. viii, shortly to be published by the Alcuin Club.

<sup>3</sup> Choir and nave being *structurally* one in the early church.

PLATE III



AMBO ON NORTH SIDE OF CHOIR, SAN CLEMENTE, ROME





§ 10. The nave, which in the earliest days was square in form (code of Theodosius) was in itself subdivided into three areas as follows :

- (a) The lowest—occupied by penitents still undergoing probation.
- (b) The middle and elevated portion reserved for readers, singers, and for such of the clergy as were deputed to minister at the first service (*missa catechumenorum*).

In front of this, and facing the lower portion was the ambo, or reading desk.

- (c) The highest, a position of honour, nearest the sanctuary, reserved for the accepted penitents or “consistentes.”

The lowest division (a) of the early naves corresponds to the yet earlier narthex, which, as we have seen, was the place allotted to penitents and catechumens. This division disappears in the evolution of the Basilican Church, and internal divisions of the nave take its place.

The early choir, with its ambones, would not necessarily have been fenced or screened until the sixth or seventh century, when the division between it and the nave became well marked, the separation being doubtless needed for the sake of orderly worship. In A.D. 533 Pope Boniface made distinction between clergy and laity at Mass, and in A.D. 566 the Council of Tours forbade the choir to the laity, except for Communion. This order was repeated by the Council of Nantes, A.D. 658.

Thus originated the choir screen, and from this beginning was evolved a series of changes, the final product of which was the choir screen with its “Jubé” or roodloft as we see it in the greater churches.

The Basilica of San Clemente at Rome (Plate III) provides a valuable instance of early choir arrangements.<sup>1</sup> Here the choir enclosure consists of a low marble screen to the westward, with rectangular return walls on north and south upon which abutted the ambones or elevated tribunes. It is carried well down to the middle of the nave.

<sup>1</sup> These screens, which belonged to the earlier church (sixth century) were removed and brought up into the twelfth century church which is built over the other. (Lowrie: *Christian Art and Archaeology*, p. 168.)

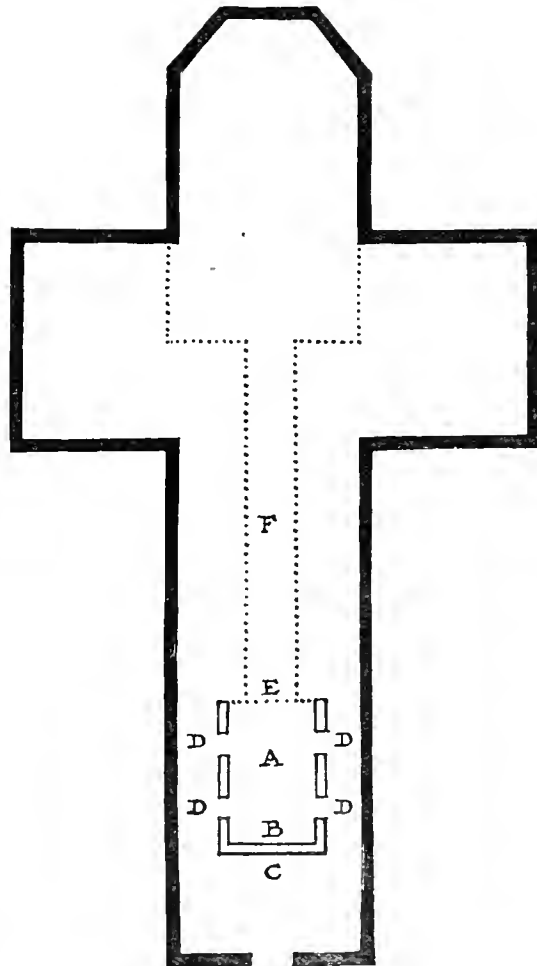


FIG. 13

In some instances it was carried further. Spain provides some examples, of which a typical specimen is here illustrated, showing the choir right down in the western part of the nave, its wall being not far from the west door (Fig. 13).

The various features are figured as follows :

- A. The choir.
- B. Bishop's seat and eagle lectern, facing east.
- C. Blind wall with altar attached.
- D. D. Doorways in side walls of choir.
- E. Iron screen at the east end.
- F. Gangway to sanctuary, railed off for its whole length.

NOTE.—Upon the side walls of the choir are seats for the musicians who are present at festivals.

Among the modifications in church arrangement which were introduced in Rome was one affecting the position of the altar.

There seems to have been a tendency (most marked in the period from the ninth to the thirteenth century) to push the altar to a position further and further to the westward, even bringing it within the limits of the choir. In some Italian and French churches the altar is said to be actually in the middle of the choir.

As an instance, the church of St. Clara of Assisi (*circa* 1253) has its altar in the middle of the crossing, and the screen consequently is westward of the transept. This screen is, of course, the sanctuary screen, but since the choir, contrary to ancient usage, has in these cases been absorbed into the sanctuary, it may be regarded as equally, in respect of its position, representing the choir screen, but dignified in virtue of its double office by the addition of those features of adornment characterising the iconostasis.

Santa Sophia exhibited originally an intermediate stage of development, the choir space being united with, but not absorbed in, the sanctuary. As will be seen by the illustrations given (Figs. 14A and 14B), the choir platform or "solea" is greatly raised, and is attached centrally to the front of the great pillared screen of the sanctuary. The ambo, of remarkable size, occupied a central position.

§ 11. In the union of choir space and sanctuary above referred to may be discerned the germ of one of the most radical changes which ecclesiology has ever known.

Brought about in Latin countries (Italy more particularly) by the enlargement of the sanctuary and the absorption of the choir within its limits, a parallel result was reached in Western districts by a totally different—nay, opposite—means, namely the accentuation of the outer, or choir screen as the principal structural division, whilst the sanctuary, though still parted from the choir, and preserved within its original narrow limits, becomes structurally one with it, the altar being at the same time placed still farther to the east.

In the East the sanctuary is not extended, but on the contrary, with lapse of years it is the more rigorously enclosed, the mediæval and modern forms of sanctuary screen being a complete and solid barrier, entirely obscuring the altar from the choir. The

PLATE IV



CAIRO. INTERIOR OF COPTIC CHURCH

Showing cancellated rood screen in foreground with rood panel over, on the further side the choir, and beyond this the sanctuary wall with its heavily curtained doorway and hagioscopes.

Above the wall is visible a portion of the series of panels forming the iconostasis.



Coptic church provides a second or outer screen between the choir and laity (see Plate IV), but this appears only as a light interior division, not as a radical subdivision of the structure in the manner in which we find it in these islands.

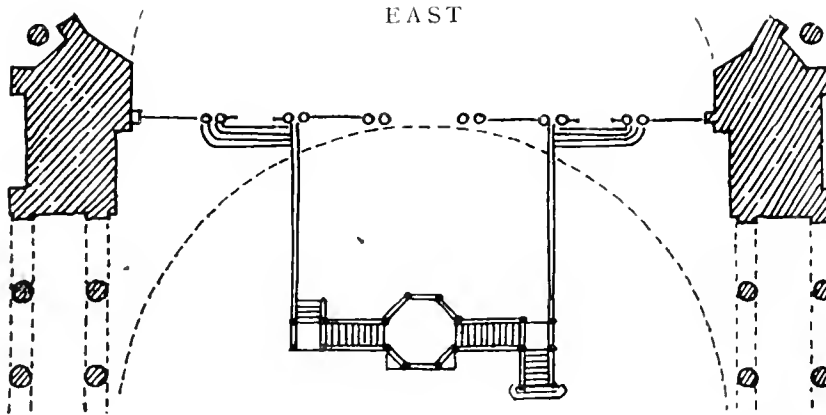


FIG. 14A

During the period of the Norman Conquest, and the rule of Norman ideas, British and Saxon influences were in abeyance. The Normans brought with them their own models of Romanesque architecture and their own methods of church-planning, which were largely Latin, as we may gather from the strong Basilican influence observable in the larger churches built there under their auspices.

In the later Roman churches of the Basilican type transepts were thrown out at the eastern extremity of the nave, in front of the sanctuary, and thus the choir became centred between them. The larger mediæval churches of Europe, with their transepts, are a development of this arrangement, under Italian influence, and thus we find that the choirs of our earlier *monastic* churches, *i.e.*, those erected under Norman influence or traditions, were placed in the nave, and partitioned off from its western bays by screens, and even when the architectural style is purely English, this arrangement is observable. Of this order, for instance, are the great churches of Saint Albans, Winchester, Chichester, Westminster, Gloucester, Kirkstall, Rievaulx, and Tintern.

Thus many of our larger churches—that is to say, the Abbey and Collegiate churches, are witness to the strength of the renewed Italian influence which came in with the Normans and for a while dominated the national ideals.

§ 12. But when we turn to a general survey of our greater churches, as Englishmen began to build them in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, we are at once confronted with evidences of a very different influence at work here. This is associated with a peculiar and very interesting development of architectural type, as an offshoot from the Romanesque, borrowing all the wealth of suggestion that the Norman could render, but assimilating this with other ideas, and becoming the

genuine and harmonious expression of architectural principles representative of the highest advance in building science. We begin to observe this in such buildings as St. David's and Glastonbury, which are both embodiments in the highest degree of the new principle, full of grace and truthfulness of expression, and free from any element of self-consciousness or affectation, being a purely spontaneous and natural growth. In the western portion of Wells Cathedral we have another instance of this new development, which finds perfect expression in such buildings as the abbey churches of Whitby or Rievaulx, and in the Cathedral of Salisbury.

The thirteenth century was one of fervent religious feeling and growth, and witnessed an extraordinary revival of national ideals in Church matters. A high artistic spirit began to find expression in architecture and the allied crafts, and this was permeated with a lofty and pure symbolism, such as later ages have altogether failed to maintain.

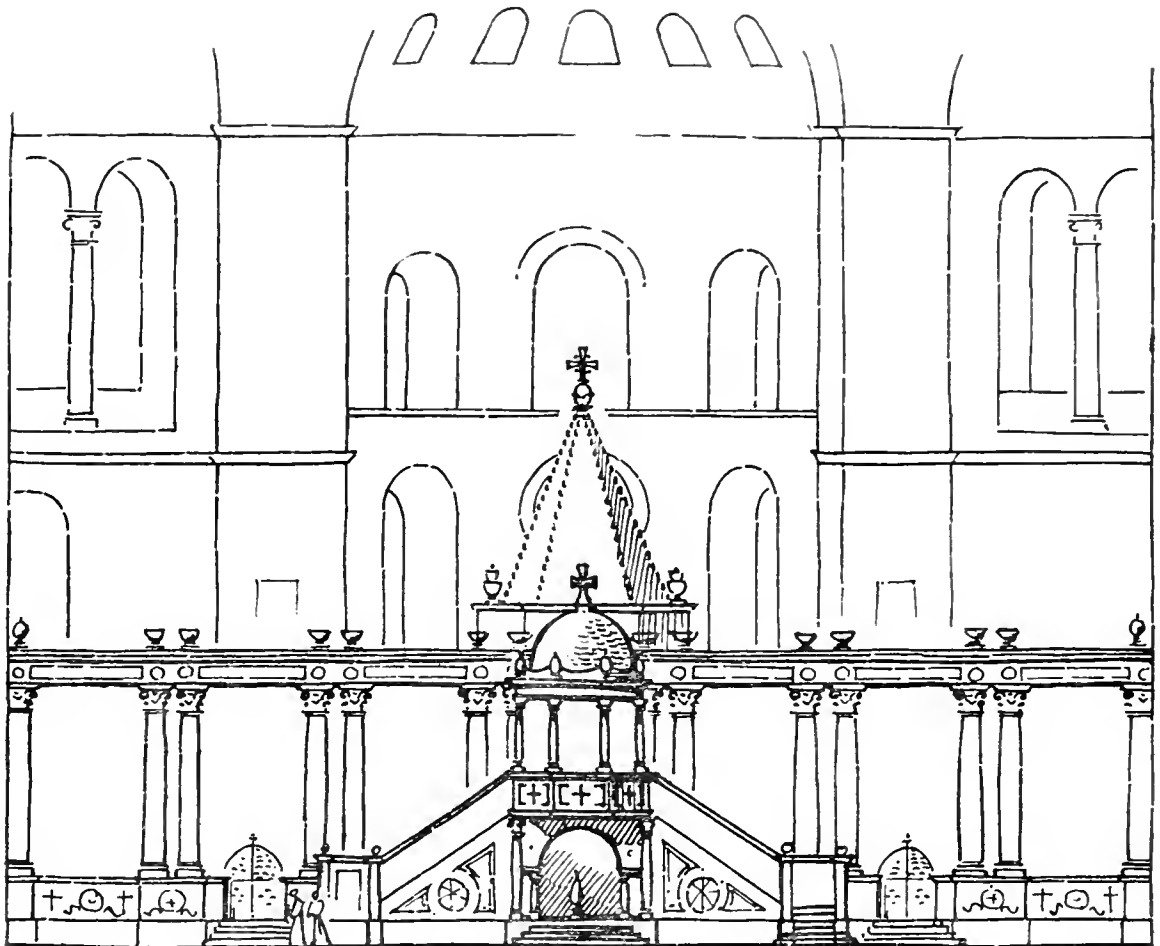


FIG. 14B

SANTA SOPHIA: SANCTUARY SCREEN, AMBO, ETC., FROM WEST

Features of construction and of plan or arrangement, originating in necessity or convenience, began to wear a symbolic aspect, grafted upon them through the pious imagination of the monkish architects, and hand in hand with this growth of symbolism was woven that web of legend and romance which has since so largely coloured our poetry and literature. A glance into the pages of a writer like Durandus shows how this symbolism is the very soul and inspiring power of all that we feel to be so sublime and yet so tender and subtle in our own "Early English" architecture. Associated with this development on the architectural side we find other evidence of the awakening of the "English" spirit, born of the union of Celt and Saxon, in the production of a new class of church buildings—a fresh departure in the planning of churches. This new method, after a struggle with the Latin ideas of planning brought in by William and his followers, ended by overthrowing them and establishing in Britain a type of church which is not only markedly national, in a degree quite exceptional, but conservative to the utmost extent of ancient principles.

We can trace in the buildings of this epoch an affinity with the old native school of ecclesiology from which Ireland took her models, and to which the churches of the province of Gaul were related in character—the source being Eastern.

Under this influence the following changes were effected :

(1) The square east end to the sanctuary, with east window, became a regular feature in place of the apse, which, originally introduced by Roman colonists, had been revived under the influence of St. Augustine's missionaries, and again by the Norman builders, who introduced it widely.<sup>1</sup>

(2) The choir and sanctuary became structurally one, taking the form of a long chancel, and at its junction with the body of the church (now the nave) appeared the chancel arch, the principal structural division—the partition between choir and sanctuary becoming in the smaller churches an internal one only.

(3) The elevation of the Host being introduced, we find open screenwork more usual in lieu of the obscurity of mural barriers—the use of the veil being confined to Lent—at the same time the altar is further withdrawn towards the east, a screen being placed in the chancel opening, and sometimes another at the sanctuary limit. In the earlier churches the altar was in advance of the east wall, with a stone bench behind it. Now it was set back against the wall, and sedilia on the south side of the chancel were substituted for the bench at the east end.

(4) Not infrequently the plan of the churches took the form of a Greek cross, the choir being usually relegated to the eastern arm or chancel, leaving the transepts free to the nave. But in some cases there appear to have been screens across both the east

<sup>1</sup> The prevalence of the square east end in early days is thought by Scott to be very remarkable, considering the close relations of Britain with Rome. The plan is unknown in Rome, and very rare on the Continent, but we cannot, he says, evade the conclusion that it prevailed in Christian Britain in the fifth century, and its persistence after 1,400 years is remarkable. Ireland was Christianised from Britain in the fifth century by St. Patrick. The form of Irish churches is always square-ended, showing that this was the tradition of their tutors, the British.

and west arms of the crossing, and this was probably connected with some collegiate use of the chancel.

(5) In some large churches of the cathedral type, two sets of transepts are provided, the first or western pair (which are the principal transepts) being generally thrown open to the nave, the choir screen traversing the eastern arm of the crossing, and the whole space eastward, as far as the second transepts, being occupied by the choir. The sanctuary or presbytery was placed yet further to the east, beyond the second line of transepts, these being thrown out to form a structural disconnection between choir and sanctuary, and at the western limit of the latter it is probable that there was a second screen. This has, generally speaking, not been preserved, though it remains to us at Saint David's (Plate I), where it divides the chancel midway, there being no secondary transepts. The choir is under the crossing and its screen divides the transepts from the nave.<sup>1</sup>

The grandest instances of this cathedral type are seen at Lincoln, York, Beverley, and Salisbury.

At Glastonbury the arrangement was typically English. This great church had but one pair of transepts, being built before the period at which the secondary transept was customary, yet here there is no encroachment of the choir upon the transeptal area. The great stone choir screen, or pulpitum, stood in each case under the choir arch, to the east of the crossing (Plate V).

Such are the main outlines of those changes which have been held to constitute the greatest ecclesiological innovation of the Middle Ages in our own country. They have given us in the first place a distinct type of church, and in the second place have caused the roodscreen or chancel screen to become a central and distinctive feature in our parish churches.

The beautiful sanctuary arches built by the Norman architects appear to have been very generally converted into chancel or choir arches by the removal of the shallow apse, and the prolongation of the eastern arm of the cross.

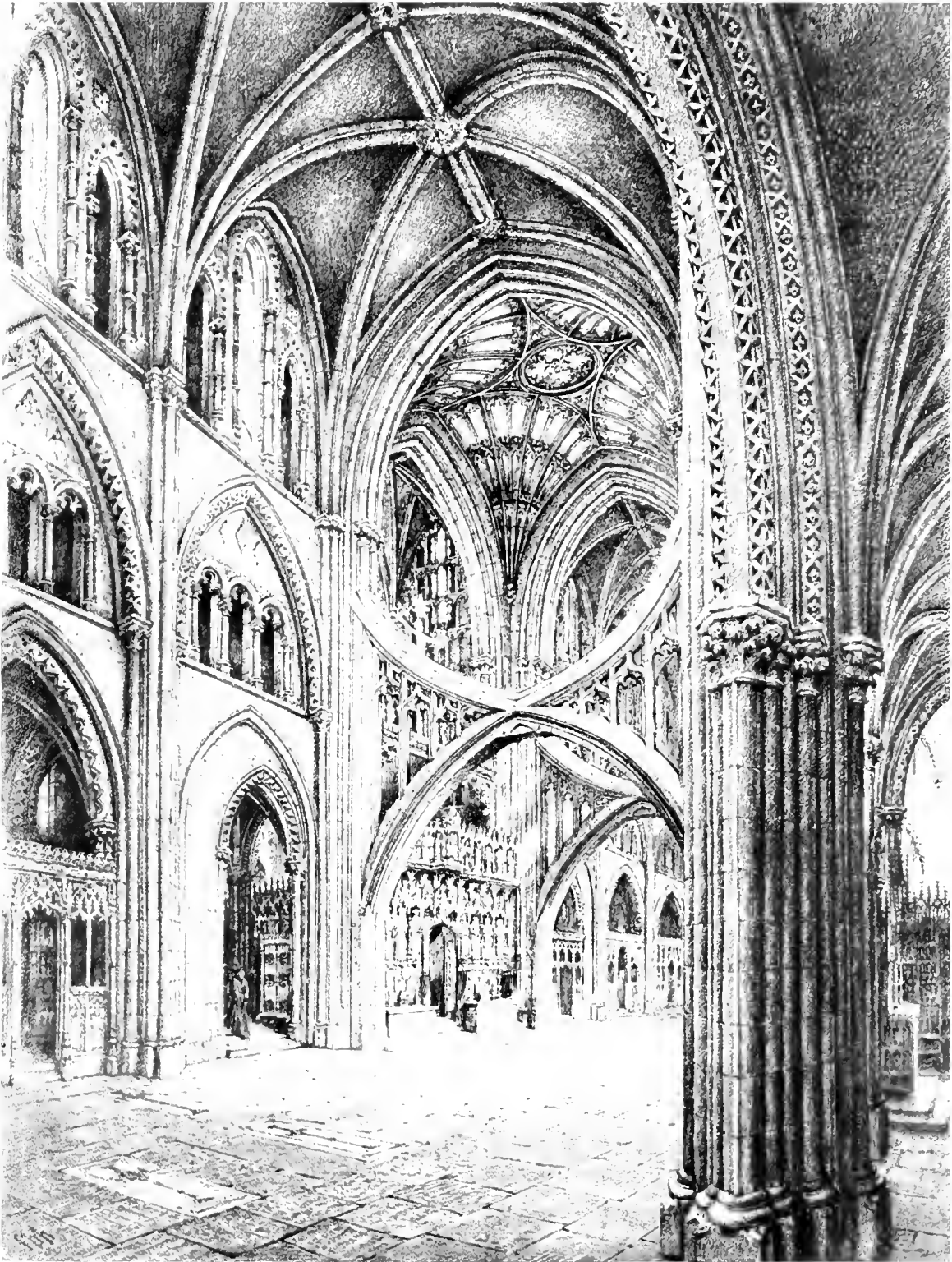
§ 13. Perhaps the most interesting of all English types of church-building is that of which several specimens are known to have existed in the earlier period, in which the triple division in the length of the church, into nave, choir and sanctuary<sup>2</sup> (or as Rev. J. M. Neale puts it, "Nave, Chancel, and Sanctum Sanctorum") is strongly marked. It is a division of which we may trace a counterpart in those Norman buildings which have the central tower with its double arches beneath. At Peterchurch in Herefordshire (Fig. 15) is a remarkable instance of the triple division, in which the chancel (which is narrower than the nave and is separated from it by a heavy arch) is further contracted midway on its length, and at this point a Norman archway of narrow dimensions admits

<sup>1</sup> Secondary screens still exist at Brecon Priory, Edington Abbey (Wilts), and Ewenny Priory—whilst there are remains of this arrangement at Dunstable and Dorchester Abbey. Tawstock Church, Devon, has also a secondary screen of similar nature—in some of these cases the choir stalls (Plate VI) may have been included to the eastward of the screen, in which case the screen becomes a choir screen or pulpitum, indicative of a triple series, since the roodscreen would have been to the westward, and a sanctuary screen or veil to the eastward, of it.

<sup>2</sup> That is, anciently, narthex, nave-choir, and sanctuary.



PLATE V



GLASTONBURY ABBEY

The transepts and choir arch, with Abbot De Tanton's screen, as they probably appeared circa 1500.  
N.B. - The arch in the foreground is assumed as an artistic license in order to obtain the desired point of view.



to the sanctuary, which again has an apsidal arched recess. On each side of the sanctuary arch is a stone altar. By the separation of the choir from the nave, and the resulting separation of the worshippers under the three-fold head of celebrant, clerks, and people, the primitive idea of the tripartite division of the Temple is perpetuated, and the marked structural divisions such as we have cited in churches like Brixworth and Peterchurch, when regarded in the light of the ideas of Durandus and other writers of his time, seem to show that these features were not the outcome of convenience merely, but had a definite intention underlying them of a symbolic as well as a historical tradition.

The Peterchurch plan would appear to have been a fairly usual one in the eleventh or twelfth century. Many instances still survive, and we are able to give a number of illustrations, some of which are gathered from the Buckler Collection (Br. Mus.). The churches of Checkenden, Oxon. (Fig. 16A); Sutton, Kent; and Birkin, Yorks. (Fig. 16c), show the square choir, and apsidal presbytery or sanctuary. That of Dunham Magna, Norfolk (Fig. 16B) is a pre-Norman instance.

Scotland provides a perfect instance in Dalmeny Church (Fig. 16D), and another at Leuchars (Fig. 16E), which has lost its old nave. The plan of the church on Brough of Birsay, Orkney, borrowed from MacGibbon and Ross's "Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland," Vol. I, presents an instance of exceptional interest (Fig. 17). Here the apse, originally open to the choir, was screened off in mediæval times by a stone reredos wall and altar, the footings of which remain. The little choir is almost a true square, and before its western opening are the remains of two circular turrets containing evidences of the

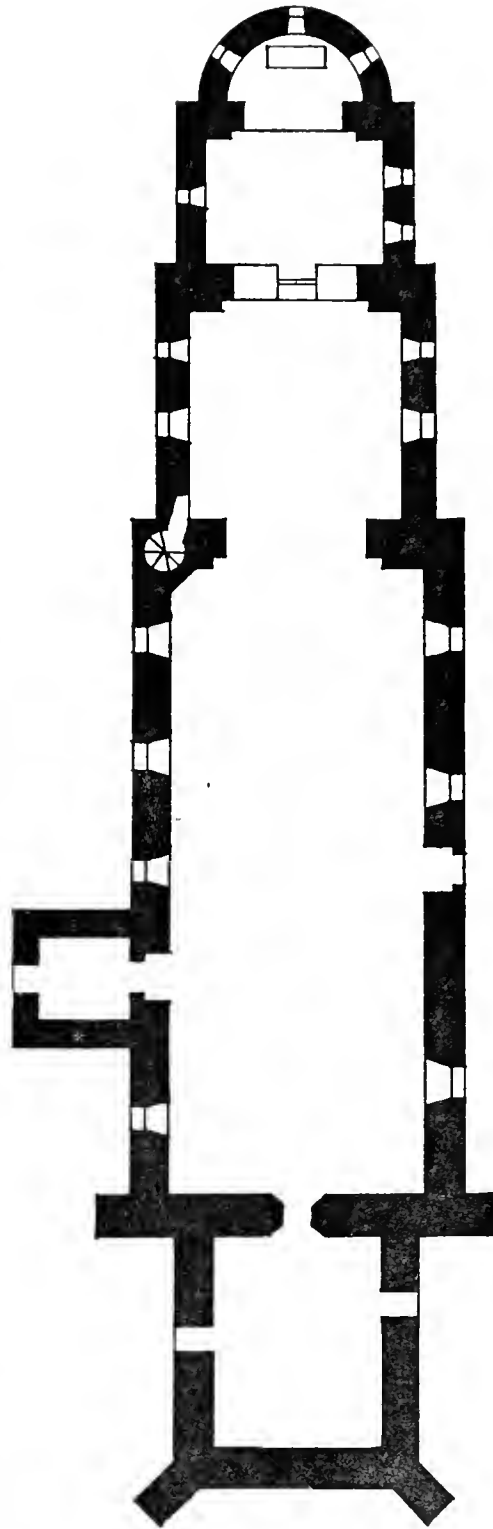


FIG. 15

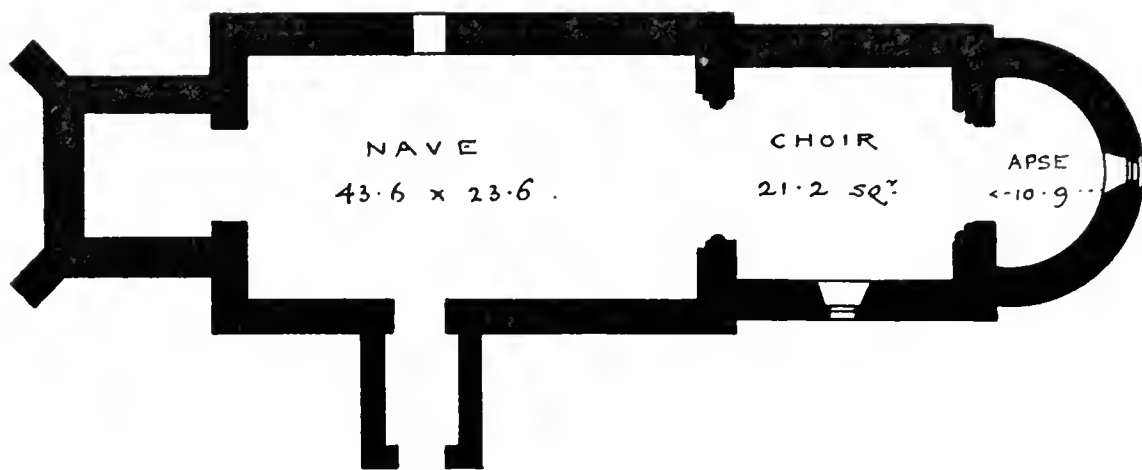


FIG. 16A

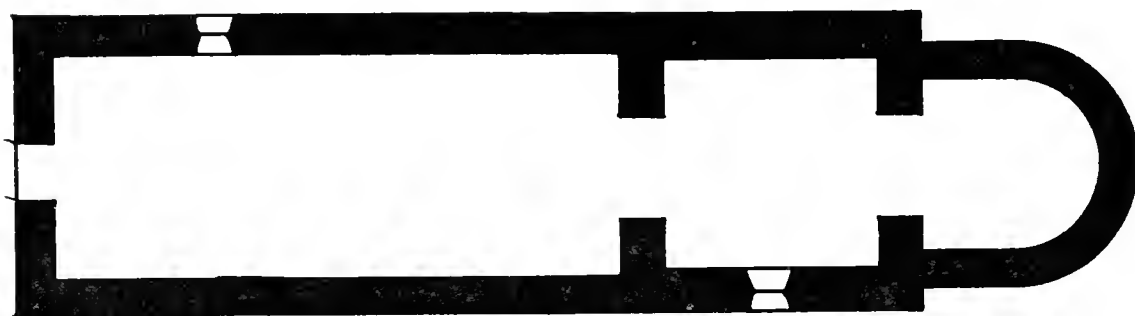


FIG. 16B

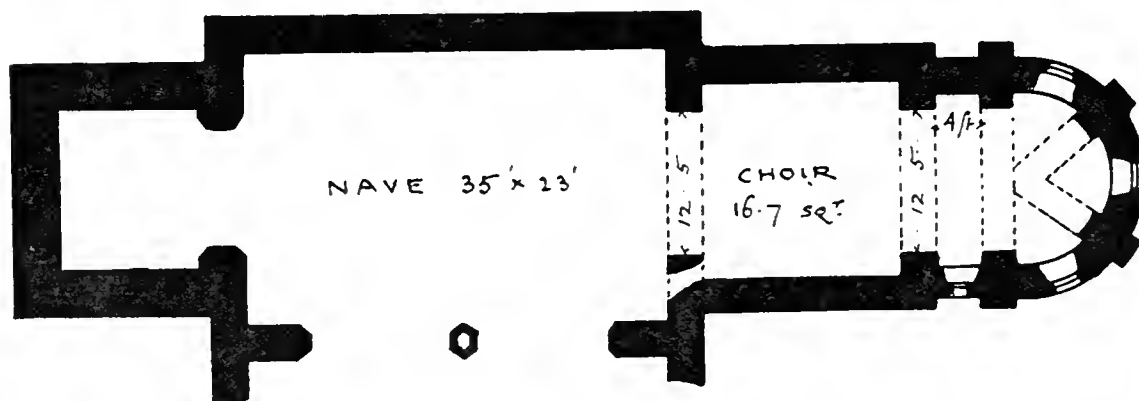


FIG. 16C

PLATE VI



TAWSTOCK CHURCH, DEVON

Secondary screen, dividing chancel from transepts



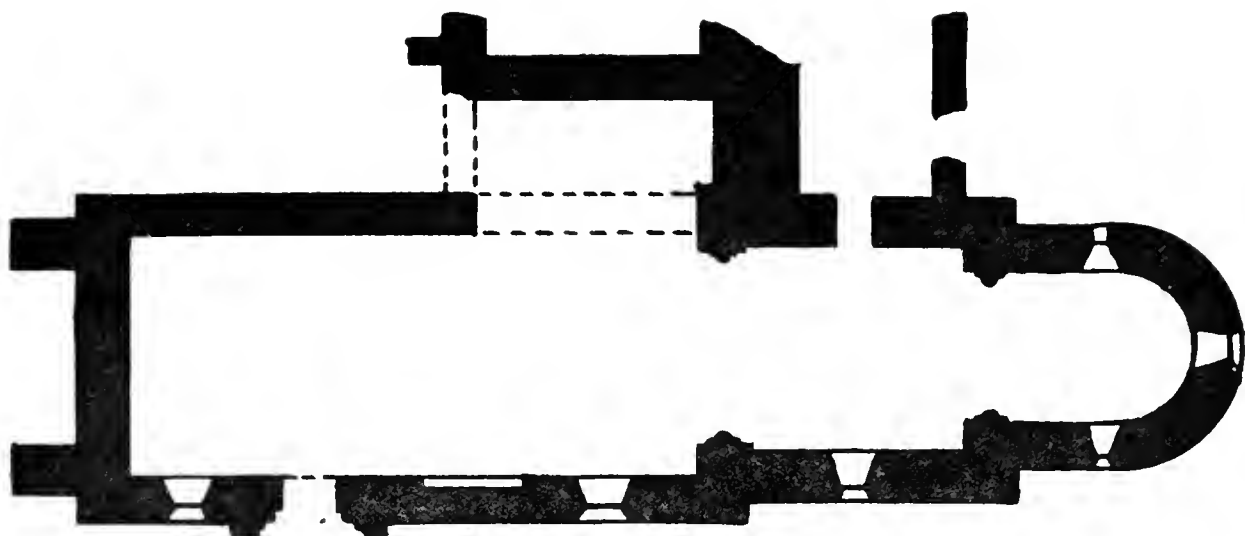


FIG. 16D

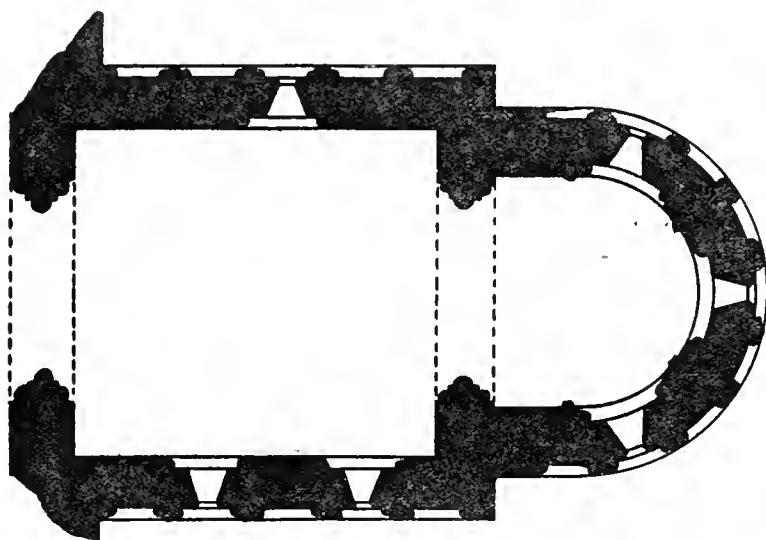


FIG. 16E

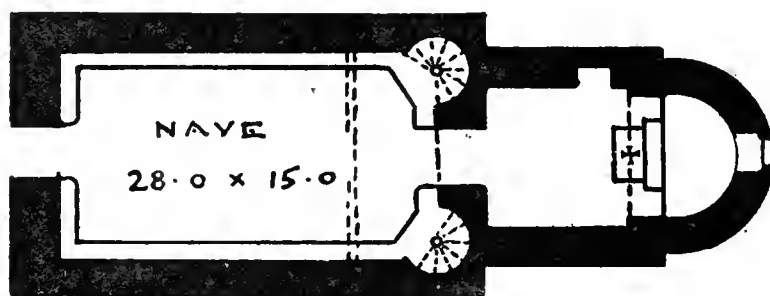


FIG. 17

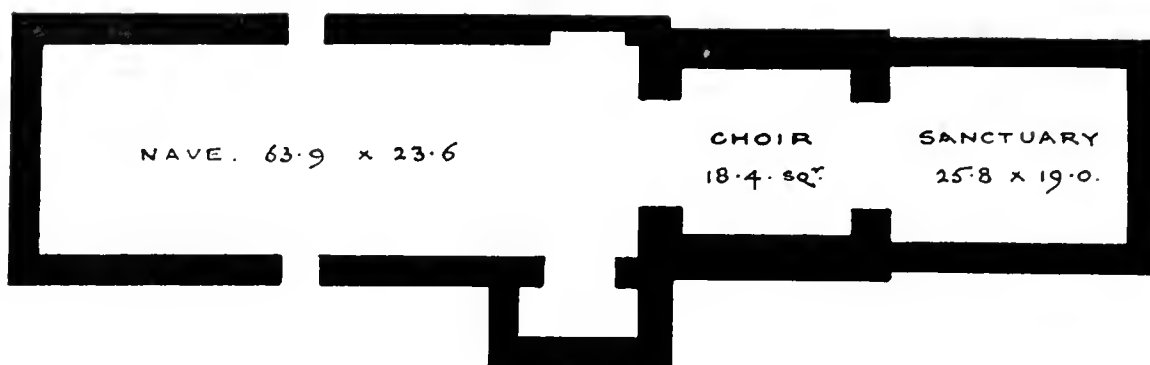


FIG. 18



FIG. 19A

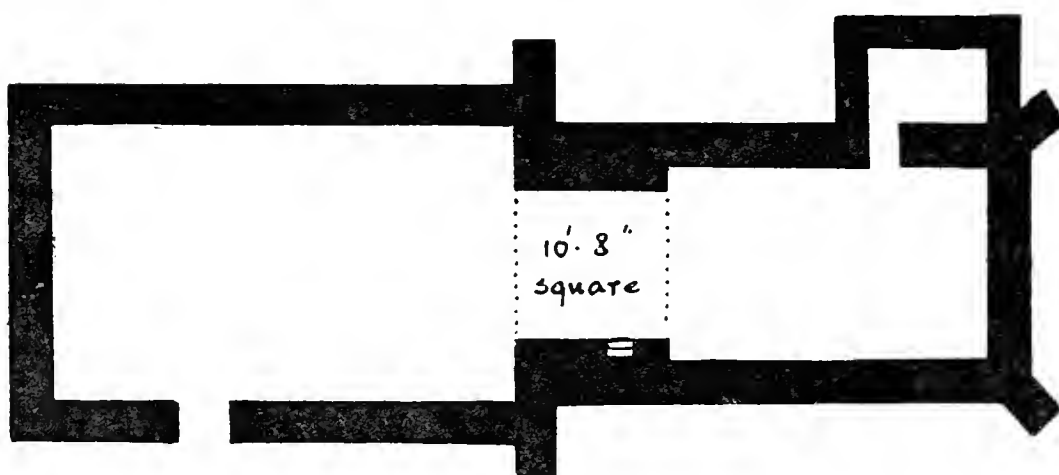


FIG. 19B



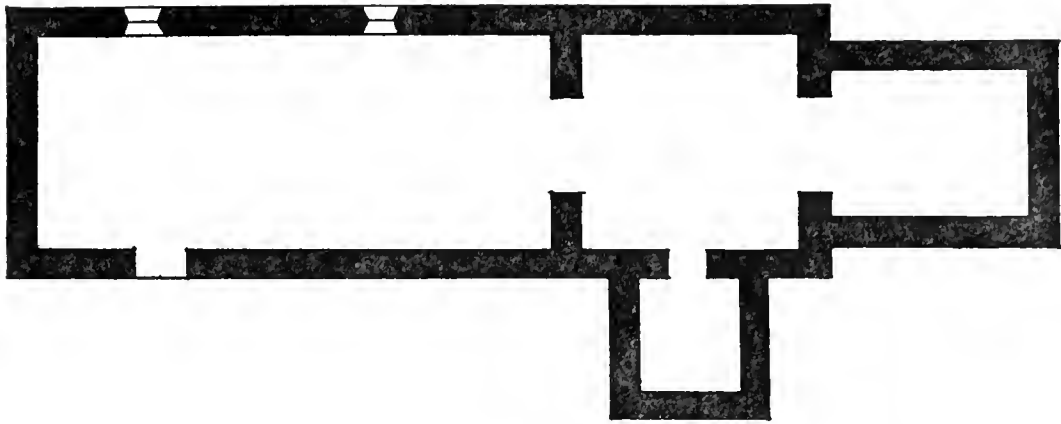


FIG. 20

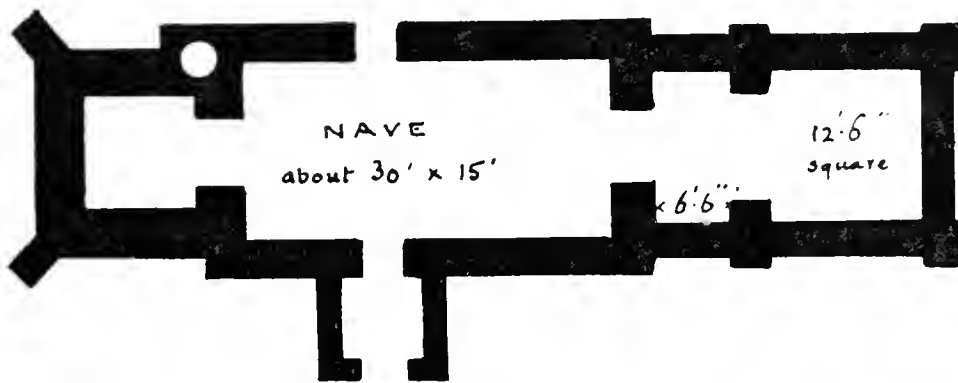


FIG. 21

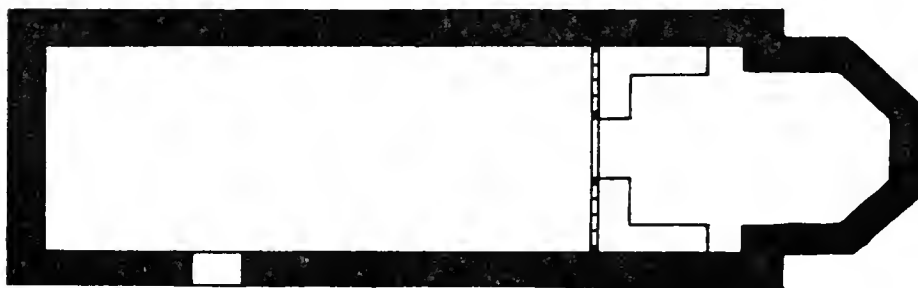


FIG. 22

former existence of spiral stairs (probably continued in wood) to a roodloft. The Church of St. James's Hospital at Dunchurch, of which a fragment was sketched in 1808, and that of Newhaven, Sussex, also illustrate the tripartite principle. St. Michael's Church, Southampton, is yet another instance of a choir beneath the Norman Tower. Some of these churches have been altered by the prolongation of the chancel to the eastward, whilst retaining the square central part unaltered. Of this nature are those of Castle Rising, Norfolk (Fig. 18), Sunninghill, Berks. (Fig. 19A), and Brockley, Suffolk (Fig. 19B), whose plans are given.<sup>1</sup> Many more exist, but these are too numerous to particularise, whilst probably a yet greater number have been altered out of all recognition. Some further varieties are shown. At Breamore (Fig. 20), the sanctuary is rectangular, and does not exhibit the degree of enlargement characterising the previous examples. Hampnet Church (Fig. 21) is an anomalous instance, and Tidmarsh Church (Fig. 22) gives us another method of procuring the tripartite plan. The choir here is simply screened off from the nave, and the sanctuary arch is alone structural.

There is another form of church plan met with in certain districts which requires separate consideration, as it differs in one very important particular from those above described as having been developed under twelfth-century influence. This is found in churches of the Celtic districts—Wales and the south-west peninsula—and in the later churches of the East Anglian counties. In neither of these do we find the choir arch as a structural feature. It is entirely missing in the Welsh churches, and almost entirely so in those of Devon and Cornwall. The Welsh churches are simple parallelograms in which the screenwork forms the sole division internally. Much the same may be said of the original Devonshire and Cornwall churches—but the general addition of aisles to these has modified their appearance.

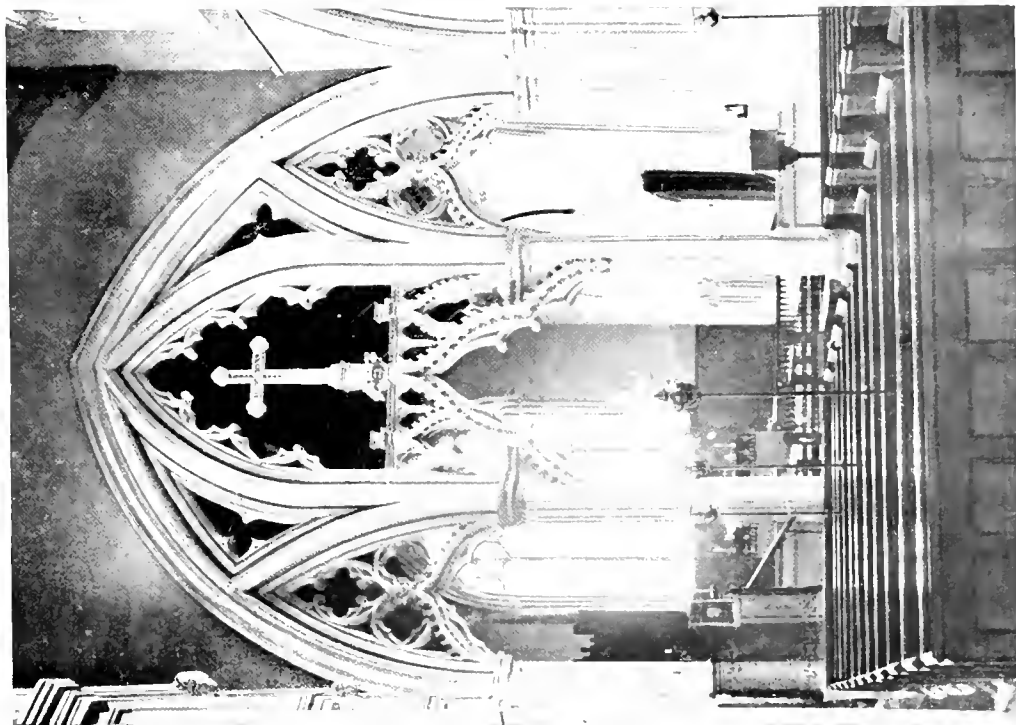
We will now endeavour to trace the origin and follow the modifications of the screenwork as we find it in our parish churches, and it will be as well to turn back in the first place to the beginnings. The churches of our Celtic forefathers were doubtless rude and simple structures, but for any definite information as to their form we are dependent upon such hints as may be gathered from early writings. There are descriptions extant of the church built in the fifth century by Saint Brigit at Kildare,<sup>2</sup> from which it would appear that there was a double nave—there being a partition down the centre, the division on the right being reserved for men, that on the left for women (Fig. 23). Both naves communicated by a doorway with the sanctuary, the screen in which these two doorways existed being opaque—we are told it was decorated by paintings—and the doors covered with veils.<sup>3</sup> The description implies a form closely analogous to the iconostasis and shrouded sanctuary of the Eastern churches.

<sup>1</sup> These are reproduced from the Buckler manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> In a "Life of St. Brigit by Cogitosus"; and a fifteenth century Gaelic MS. "Life of St. Columba," preserved in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh.

<sup>3</sup> Warren: "Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church," p. 91.

PLATE VII

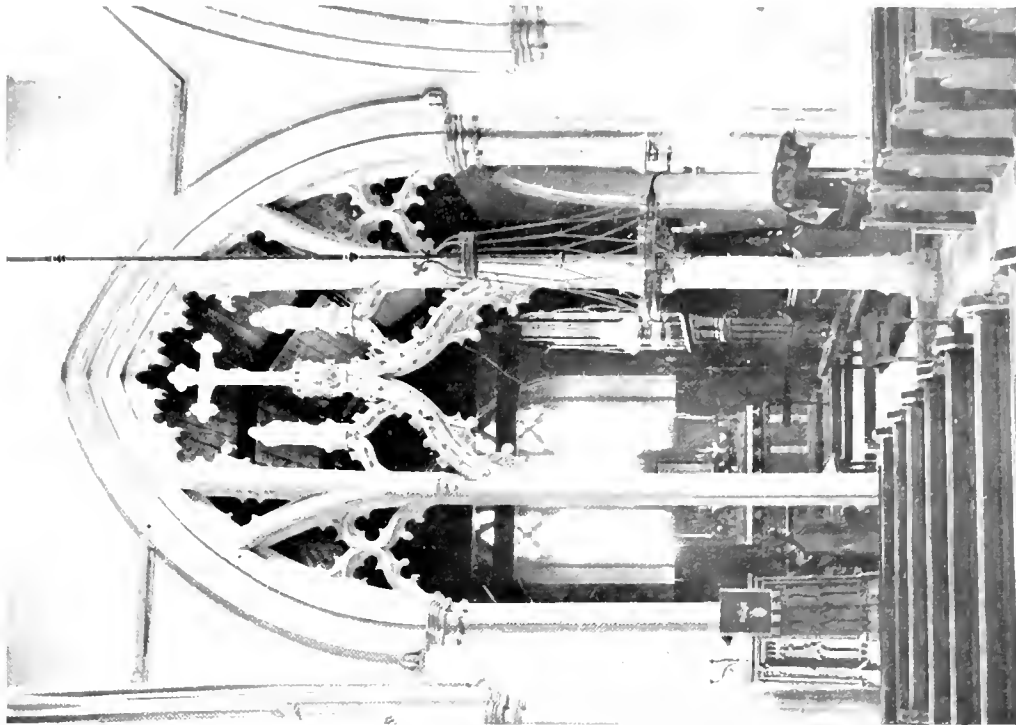


(A)

MEBBING, ESSAY XIV CENTURY

THE TRIPLE ARCADE

Appearing as Tracery in the Chancel Arch



(B)

GREAT PARISH CHURCH, ESSAY XV CENTURY



So far then as documentary evidence can guide us, it appears that the British (Celtic) churches contained a solid or opaque sanctuary screen. For the rest we may assume, with Gilbert Scott, that they were like the Irish oratories in their general features.

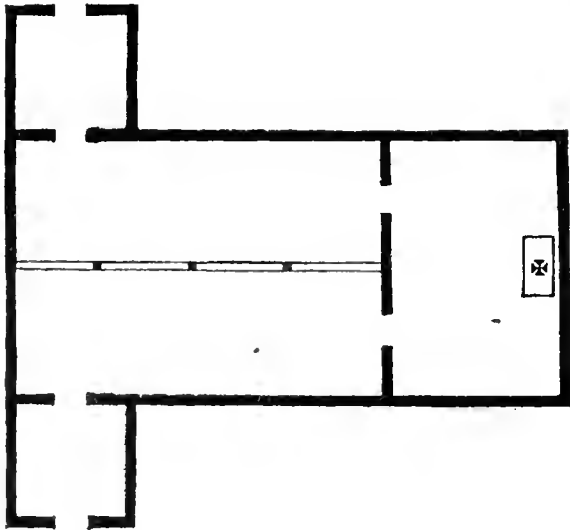


FIG. 23

wall separating sanctuary from nave and penetrated, as at St. Lawrence, Bradford-on-Avon, by a single opening of the slenderest proportions, we have the counterpart of the Kildare screen in another material and style of building. In these churches of the "Saxon" era, too, it is probable that the doorways were veiled, by a curtain attachment to a rod across the opening.

The custom of entirely enclosing the sanctuaries of churches with a solid barrier very probably had a practical, as well as a liturgic or symbolic, side to it. In the earliest days of all, when worship was extremely simple in form, and confined to the tried and faithful few, there would have been no active need of this, and De Fleury says that the early Christians did not always veil the Ceremony of the Mass, or if they did, the custom was not a general one. Probably it was at first purely an Oriental custom. A fresco of a Syrian cemetery chapel, for instance, shows a liturgical veil. But the sanctuaries in the earliest days were open to the faithful

The little churches of the Hebrides and the north of Scotland are for the most part built upon this plan and offer a striking demonstration of the narrowness of the sanctuary opening. We give plans of those at Wyre, Orkney (Fig. 24A), Lybster, Caithness (Fig. 24B), and Uyea, Shetland (Fig. 24C).

§ 14. The Anglo-Saxons, largely Christianised by the northern missionaries, adopted their type of church building, and we find it dominant in most localities. In their heavy stone

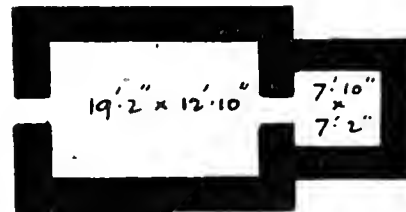


FIG. 24A

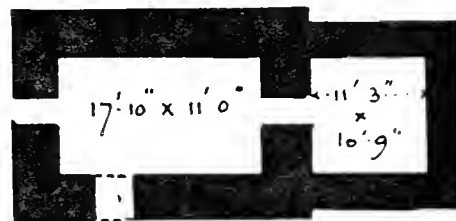


FIG. 24B

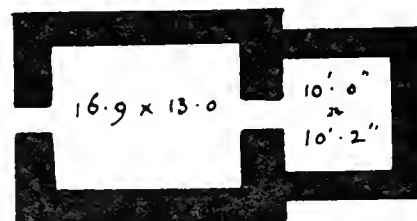


FIG. 24C

worshippers, the initiates in the liturgic secrets, and nothing stood in the way of unveiling to them the view of the Holy Mysteries.<sup>1</sup> But with the Peace of the Church came a great influx of new members, worship ceased to present the old difficulties or dangers, and it became expedient to separate the Presbytery more effectually and to place a bar between the neophytes and those sacred things which they would not understand, for they were a rude crowd, often profane, and quite untried in loyalty. To a certain extent, therefore, the solid barrier might appear to be characteristic of a church amongst uncivilised people, but its liturgic and symbolic side is far more important, and must not be lost sight of.

§ 15. The Eastern type of church with its veiled sanctuary represents the Johannine or mystic tradition in Christian worship, being that aspect which appealed to the philosophic mind of the Greek. It bears witness to the presence of a treasured and sacred inner teaching, the Divine Sophia or Wisdom, of which the exoteric doctrine was but a partial expression adapted to the imperfections of the human understanding.

In the church of the Grotto of the Apocalypse at Patmos is one of the most ancient of the structural forms accompanying this school of teaching. Here the iconostasis is simply a wall pierced by a door and two small windows, the whole surmounted by a figure of Our Lord in the Byzantine manner (Dom. Calmet: "Dict. de la Bible). This apparently early instance of a sacred figure is probably indicative of a regular custom. At Bradford-on-Avon there was no doubt a similar figure (probably one of Our Lord in glory), as the two remaining figures of angels in adoration testify.<sup>2</sup>

Not only in the more important features of our early church building and arrangement is this Eastern influence found, but in minor matters—details of furnishing and equipment—it is equally to be traced. For example, in the churches of the Orient it was the universal custom in former times to use a "flabellum" or solid fan—generally of repoussé silver—to keep gnats off the chalice—the same object is represented more than once in the Irish Book of Kells. The Egyptians also used a "textus-case" of enriched metal for holding their scriptures—corresponding to the Irish *cumhdach* in which a copy of the Gospels is supposed to be sealed up. We find other links with eastern custom in the Celtic practice of mixing the chalice before the Liturgy (afterwards common in non-Roman parts of the west), and the pouring of the water first, as in Russia to this day.

<sup>1</sup> In the "Pratum Spirituale" is a story told by John of Moschus (d. 620 A.D.) of certain shepherd boys of the sixth century, who, playing at "church" went through all the ceremonial of the liturgy and recited the Invocation and other prayers. He says that the children stood near the sanctuary, and both heard and saw the service at the altar.

<sup>2</sup> The angel figures furnish a counterpart to the Cherubim which appeared on the veil in the Jewish Tabernacle.

Upon an Anglo-Saxon tablet of ivory, preserved in the University Museum of Antiquities at Cambridge, may be seen a glorified figure of Our Lord, and beneath, a rood carried by two angels exhibiting almost precisely the characters of those at Bradford-on-Avon.

Also in the short sceptre-like "bachul" or Bishop's crozier, and the position of the "Kiss of Peace" in the Liturgy. A brief consideration of these interesting analogies may be serviceable as tending to demonstrate the reality of the links which bound East and West together in those primitive days of our Faith.<sup>1</sup>

The earliest Christian settlements in Britain probably dated from the latter half of the second century. They were effected by missionaries from Gaul, and it has been suggested that the Aurelian persecution, which took place in the South of Gaul about the year 177 A.D., may have stimulated this movement. They used a liturgy which was to all intents and purposes identical with that used in Gaul.

To trace the various other chains of influence that bind East to West in those early days were a fascinating task, but one outside the scope of this work. Whether by land or sea, through the intercourse of Semite trader,<sup>2</sup> or the missionary activity of Christian proselytisers,<sup>3</sup> legend and history unite in pointing to the Orient as being not only the birthplace of our religion, but in a very real and intimate sense our early guide and tutor, the parent of our primitive ecclesiological arts and customs.

Let us now consider more particularly the models followed by our Saxon ancestors in the building of their churches, as regards the enclosure of the sanctuary.

§ 16. The prevalent type of Saxon church is that in which the sanctuary, which is of small dimensions, exhibits a square east-end, with a solid wall dividing it from the nave. This would appear to be derived from the older British types and most of the churches built about the period of the re-Christianising of the people by those northern evangelists, to whom a large share

<sup>1</sup> Duchesne suggests that this liturgy, which afterwards became of paramount use in the Western churches, came to us through Gaul, from Milan, which he considers to have been the active centre of development.

<sup>2</sup> The Phœnicians were a northern tribe of Semitic blood, and it is they who were the artists of the race. All the distinctive features of the Jewish temple are characteristic of them. Who can say how far they may not have impressed their ideas—even their building models—on people here?

<sup>3</sup> Of the legendary mission of the Apostles to Britain little can be said. Until some more tangible evidence is forthcoming these will remain legends only, and are scarcely matter for serious argument. That of Saint Paul is recalled, says Scott, by the fact that the original Basilica of St. Paul-extra-Muros at Rome was until the Reformation always under the protection of the British sovereign—a traditional patronage which might appear to suggest a confirmation of the story that the work of the Apostle extended to these islands.

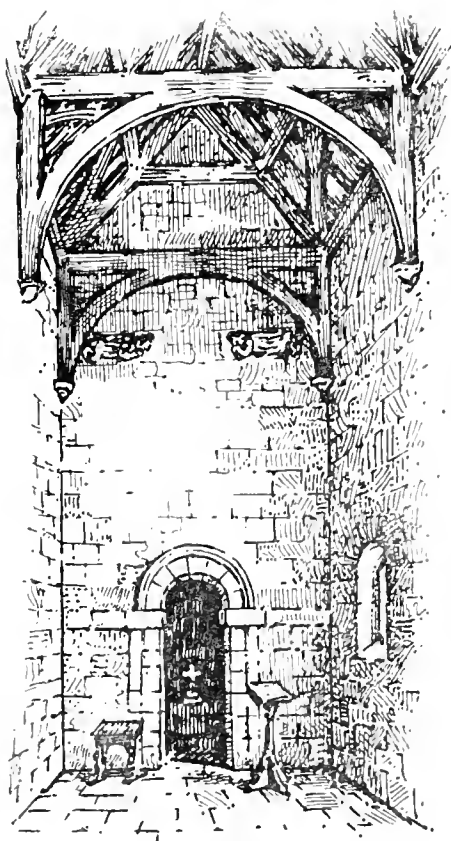


FIG. 25

of successful mission work in the seventh century is attributed, would naturally have followed their traditions.

The effectiveness of the barrier between nave and sanctuary is strikingly emphasized in such instances as that of St. Lawrence, Bradford-on-Avon (an eighth-century church) in which the opening which does duty as a chancel-arch is scarcely more than a mere doorway (Figs. 25 and 5B, *ante*).

A chancel-arch of hardly greater diameter, measuring, in fact, only 4 feet 3 inches in width, was standing until the middle of the nineteenth century, at Upton, Bucks.<sup>1</sup> And there is another good example at Chalbery, near Blandford, Dorset. Across these narrow openings a veil was hung, and the whole act of Consecration was hidden from the people, probably for reasons of a practical, as well as a liturgic or ritual nature. But side by side with the churches built after the primitive British model there are others of the same period which conform to a different type. These are found in the more southerly districts, and were erected by artificers from among the Roman settlers; and of these some fragments still remain incorporated with the fabric of later churches, as in the case of the Church of St. Martin, Canterbury, restored by St. Augustine, of which Bede says that it had been originally constructed by Roman believers, thus apparently suggesting a distinction between native and Roman workmanship.

The remains of the Church at Silchester, excavated in recent years, show a distinctly Basilican plan,<sup>2</sup> but the Roman type of church never became dominant here. The British tradition was destined to survive not only the influence of the Roman settlers, and the destruction wrought by the Saxon and British conquests, but even the power of the Italian influence brought by Augustine and his monks. Certain features of Roman importation—notably the apse—are observable in the remains of some of the churches of the earlier Saxon period, but in a modified form.

Those churches, however, of which we spoke above, and which may be termed Romano-British, present a feature of singular interest in the form of the screenwork which is associated with them. This consists not in a single opening, like the British type, but in a series of three arches, sometimes of equal size, supporting a wall placed across the church. These recall the three arched portals, spoken of by Eusebius in his description of the church of Paullinus above referred to.

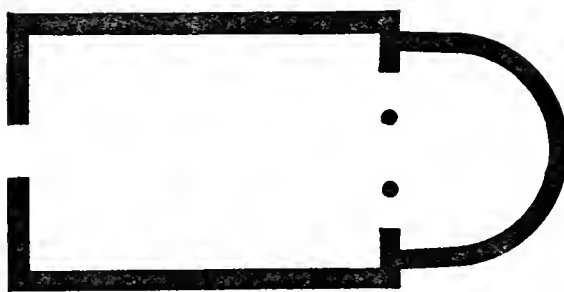


FIG. 26

It was then removed, and a wider one substituted; the stones of the original being built into the east wall of the new south aisle. The original arch is figured in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 28, New Series, p. 489, Nov., 1847.

<sup>2</sup> There is no proof that this was originally built as a church, and the probability seems to lie in the theory that it was a pre-Christian building adapted, like others of its class, to the purpose of worship. Saint Augustine consecrated many buildings formerly used for heathen worship. See his correspondence with St. Gregory in St. Bede's "Ecclesiastical History."



PLATE VIII  
EARLY ENGLISH SCREENWORK



(A) SCREEN IN SAINT MARY'S HOSPITAL, CHICHESTER



(B) ROODSCREEN, STANTON HARCOURT, OXON



Of this nature was the mural screen in the very early and simple plan of the church at Rochester (Fig. 26), where, however, the apse was shallow, and the arcade may be regarded as a sanctuary screen rather than a choir screen.<sup>1</sup>

There are, however, other examples, as that of St. Pancras, Canterbury (Fig. 28), in which it is equally clear that this feature marks the more outward division—the *πύλαι ὡραῖαι* and *βασιλικαὶ*—"beautiful and royal gates," which in the early churches separated the "naos" from the "pronaos"—the "four-squared oratory of the people" from the remaining part of the body of the church between it and the outer doors,<sup>2</sup> elsewhere called the narthex.

§17. In pursuance of this argument, it may be observed that the "four-square" form of the

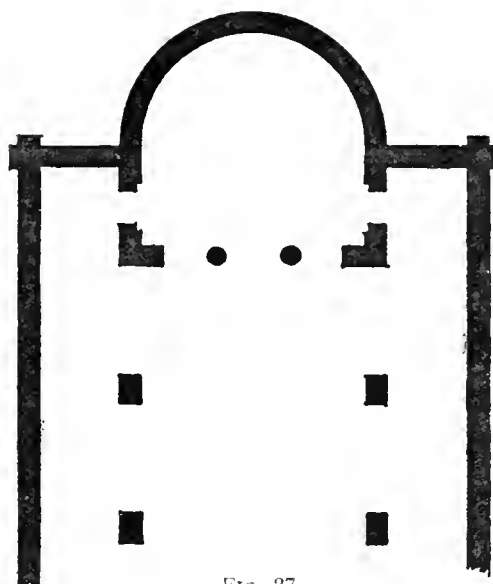


FIG. 27

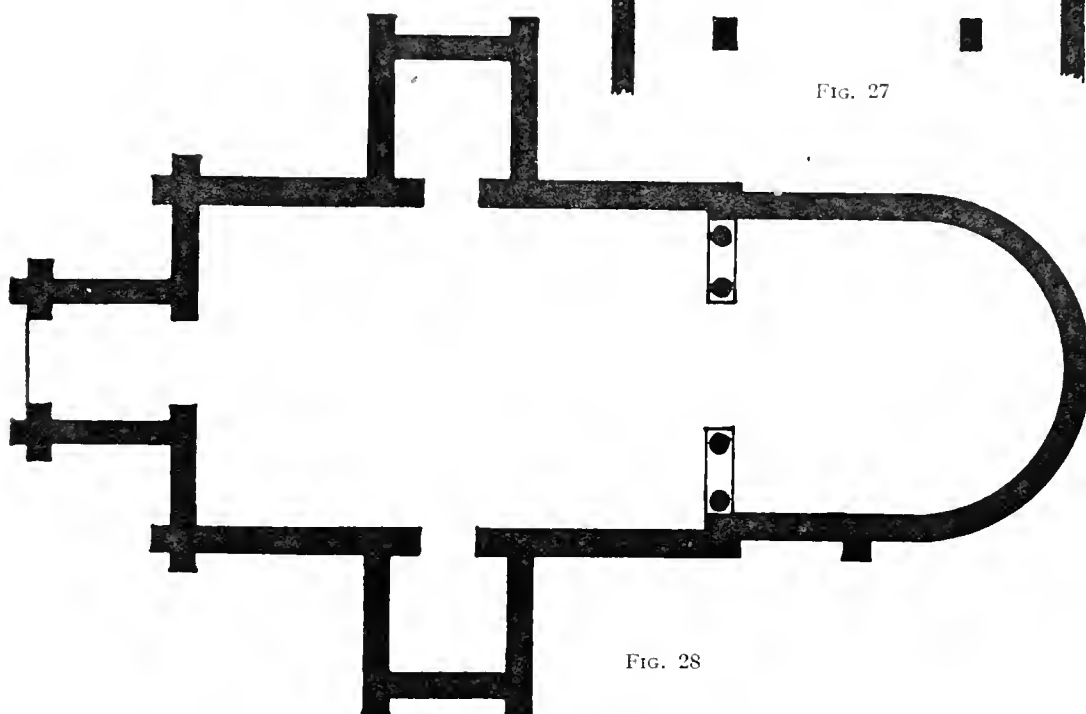


FIG. 28

intermediate section is strikingly in evidence in our own early churches, and whether we regard such a plan as Brixworth, where the square cell lay within the triple archway (Fig. 28 *ante*), or that of Dover (Fig. 29), where the figure is cruciform, and the three archways are severally in the north, west, and south—the principle is carried out with equal fidelity.

<sup>1</sup> That of Reculvers (Fig. 27) was slightly deeper.

<sup>2</sup> From a description given in a letter of Theodosius and Valentinian.

But it will be not only more convenient in respect of terminology, but also historically accurate to speak of the part enclosed between the sanctuary and the outer arcade—this

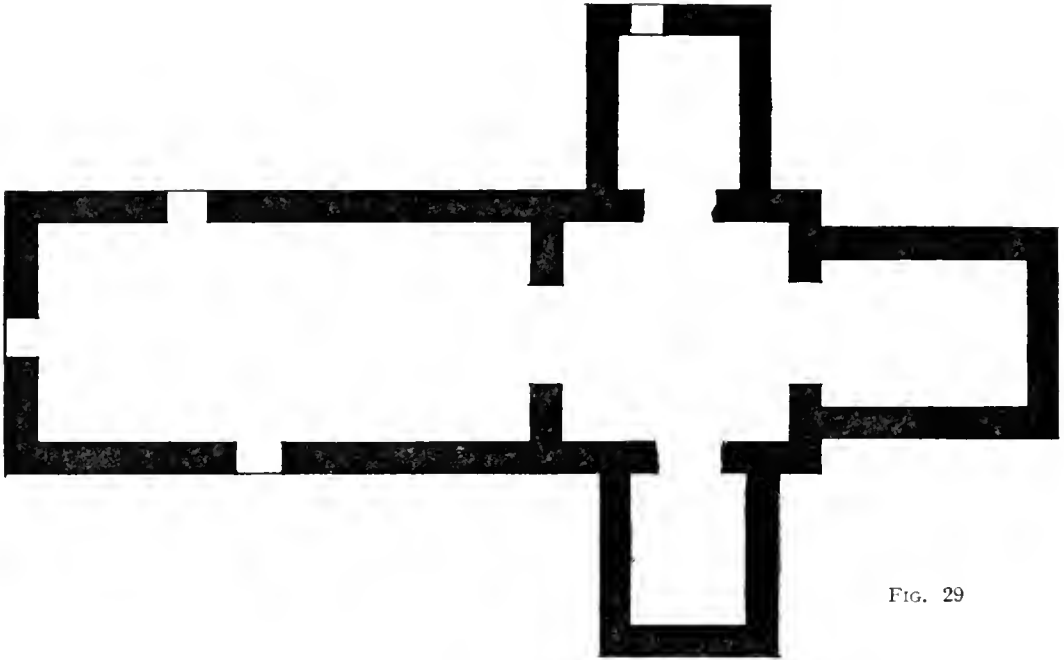


FIG. 29

square "oratory"—as the *choir*, using the word *nave* for the outer portion and thus falling absolutely into line with later uses, and the modern sense of the words.

That which had at first been the "naos" or superior division of the body of the church once contained several subdivisions, as appears from the writings of many ancient authorities.

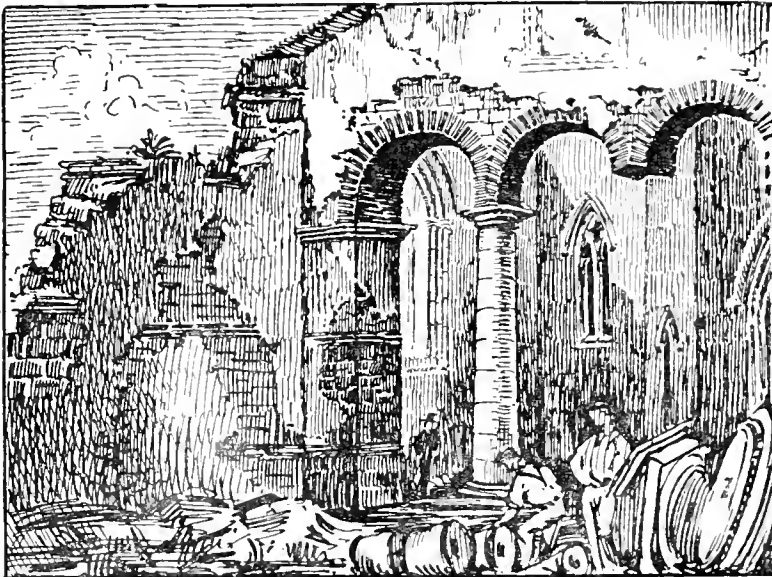


FIG. 30

Furthest to the eastward was the place of the "consistentes," next the choir, whilst below the ambo there was room provided for the *substrati*, or third degree of penitents, and beyond these others again—the whole space within the square (with the exception of that central portion reserved for canonical singers or choir) being filled by

PLATE IX



LAVENHAM CHURCH, SUFFOLK  
THE XIV CENTURY ROODSCREEN



the people, having different stations or apartments according to age, sex, or quality, etc.

But, in the sixth century, when, following Pope Boniface's orders, and those of the Councils of Tours and Nantes, it became the rule to enclose the choirs in a definite manner, this rule seems to have received two alternative interpretations.

In the one case the choir enclosure became insular in form, and was restricted to the centre of the church, so that the necessity for the old outer division disappeared—this was the Italian solution.

In the other case the whole of the "four-square oratory" was appropriated by the choir, and the space without, which had been screened from it by an open colonnade, or arcade, was enlarged into a full-sized nave to accommodate *all* the lay members of the congregation.

§ 18. We will now return to the description of the triple choir-arcade, as we find it in the sixth or seventh century in England. In 1806 there stood at Reculvers an early and perfect instance of this feature, and before it was pulled down a drawing was made, which has fortunately been preserved. A slight sketch is here given. (Fig. 30.) The arches were of equal size, all having been open, so far as can be ascertained, to the floor level. Here, and at St. Pancras, Canterbury, whose foundations still remain, the space enclosed within the arcade to the eastward is much increased, and is obviously a true choir or chancel in intent. Still more notably is this the case at Brixworth—a grand example of a seventh century church, now mutilated by the "restorers"—in which there was a well-marked division between sanctuary and choir, and another between choir and nave.

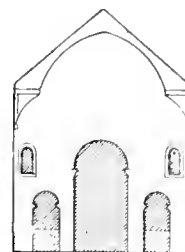


FIG. 31

The Brixworth sanctuary, which was small and narrow, opened to the choir by a tall arch after the Basilican model, but some distance to the westward, and the nave was spanned by one of these triple arcades (Fig. 31) supporting a wall and forming a distinction between the presbyteral space or choir on the one hand, and the place of the laity on the other. In this instance the central arch was wider and loftier than the side arches, and corresponded in its proportions to the sanctuary arch beyond it, whilst above each of the

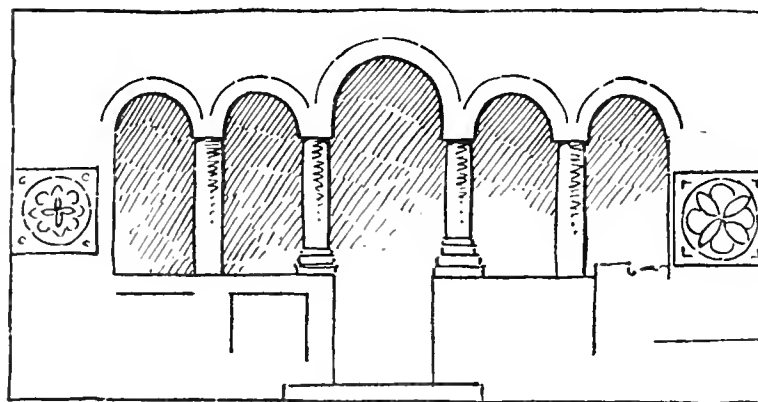


FIG. 32

smaller arches was a clerestory window, opposite and similar to the small windows still existing in the east wall, and flanking the sanctuary arch.<sup>1</sup>

The arcaded type of screen does not appear to be a feature of Roman origin, but it occurs in buildings of southern Italy, and throughout the Levantine and other Eastern districts where it appears as a sanctuary screen in churches dating from the third or fourth centuries. De Fleury, in his work, "*La Messe*," gives a variety of examples of this order, in which very frequently the central arch is much larger than the flanking ones, and in others again the side arches are not pierced, but are simply recesses for altars.

In the East are to be found many early examples of these sanctuary arcades, some having more than three openings, as at Sion (Fig. 32). In England, these appear to have been the rule, following ancient precedent, and there seems in this an undoubted symbolic intention.

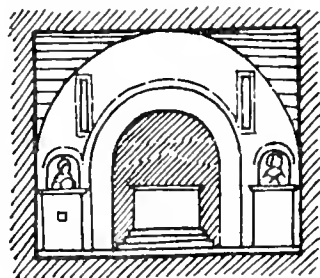


FIG. 33

In some of the examples given by De Fleury, the central arch assumes an importance which causes it to reproduce to some extent the character of the triumphal arch of the old Roman Basilica (Fig. 33); and where we have the lesser arches by its side, we have what is really a compromise between the Italian and the Levantine models.

Of this last nature is the screen or sanctuary wall of the Chapel of the Blessed Martyrs at Nola, South Italy, a Christian Pompeii of the fourth century (Fig. 34).

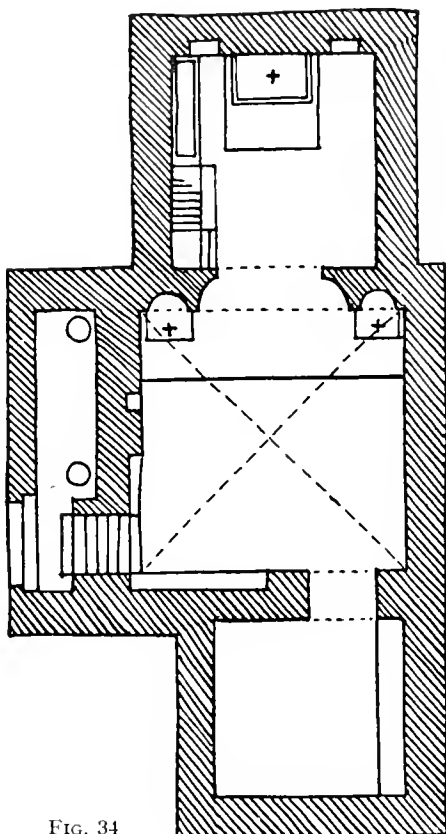


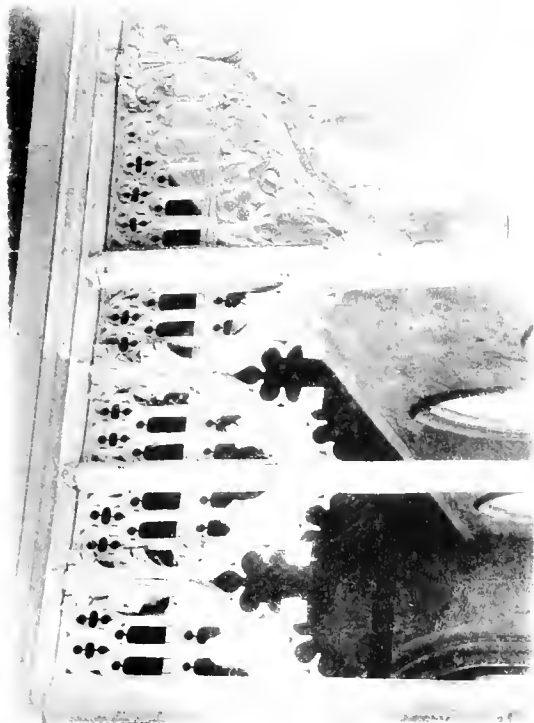
FIG. 34

In the East this type of screen, being used to enclose the sanctuary, gradually changes its form, becoming in process of time the solid Iconostasis of the Greek Church. In England, as has been shown, it assumes the position, after the sixth century, of a choir or chancel screen, and thus employed, it appears to have furnished the model for a number of later examples, of which the leading instances will be mentioned.

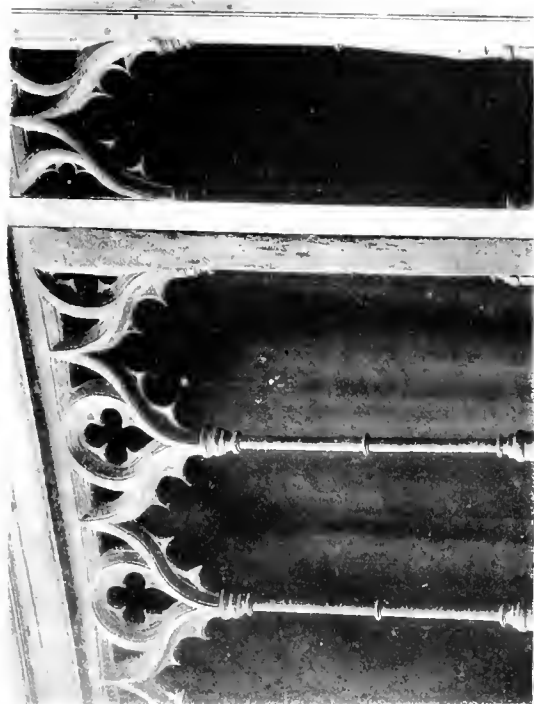
From the seventh down to the twelfth century, any authentic specimen of the triple choir-arcade is hard to discover. Partly no doubt this is attributable to the popularity of other and rival models, in which a single arch of wider dimensions

<sup>1</sup> Rev. C. F. Watkins—Monograph on Brixworth Church.

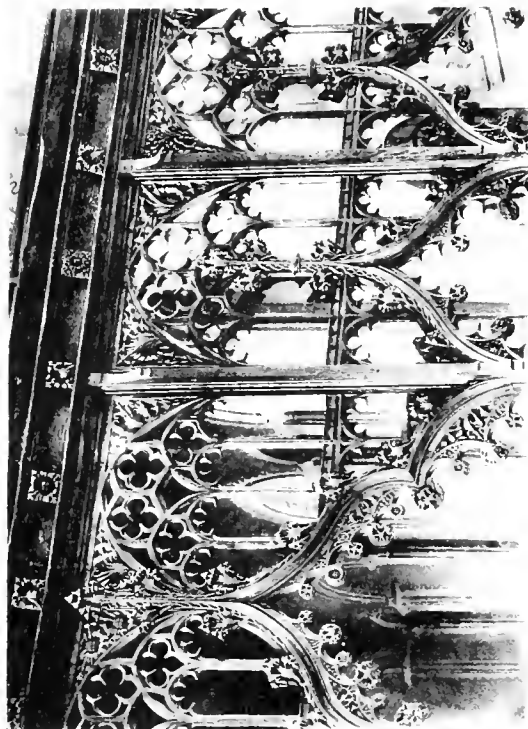




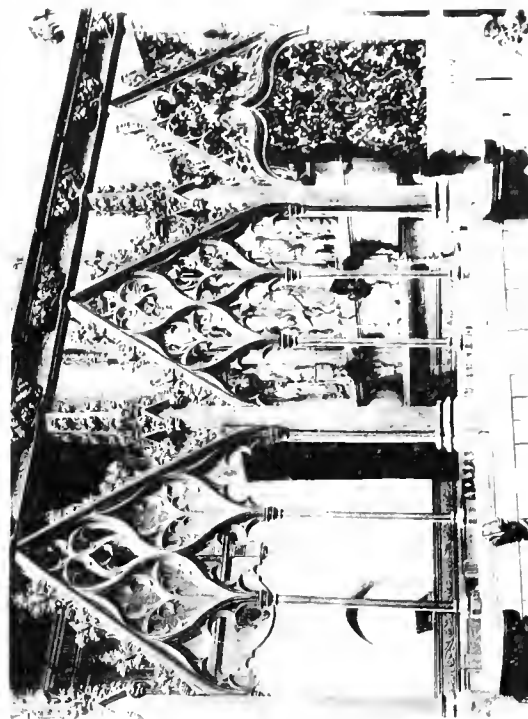
(C) LATE XIV CENTURY ROODSCREEN: BARTON, CAMBS.



(A) EARLY XIV CENTURY PARCLOSE: WILLINGHAM, CAMBS.



(D) EARLY XV CENTURY ROODSCREEN: CASTLE HEIGHAM, ESSEX  
TYPES OF SCREEN WORK  
XIV-XV CENTURIES



(B) XIV CENTURY PARCLOSE: ST. NICHOLAS, KINGS LYNN



takes the place of it, and in which we have in consequence an outer and an inner arch of similar character, as may be seen in many churches of the Norman period of cruciform shape, or possessing a central tower, in the east and west walls of which the arches lie. Others, like Peterchurch (Fig. 15), have the choir space thus separated, independently of any tower.

Other churches again of the Escomb (Durham) type had no mural barrier, but only some light internal partition (possibly the "veil" of Durandus), of which no trace remains but the significance of the position of the north and south doorways.

There are nevertheless some examples of the triple arcade which possess to all appearance a tenth or eleventh century character, but whose history modern restorations have so entirely vitiated that we cannot claim them as authentic. There is a group of churches in Sussex, in the Brighton district, which exhibit this feature.<sup>1</sup> In the class very nearly allied to this, in which the side openings were short, and mounted on a breast wall, there are numerous instances of an early date, but of the genuine triple arcade we can point to no more until the thirteenth century is reached, when several may be noted as still surviving. Perhaps the example most nearly

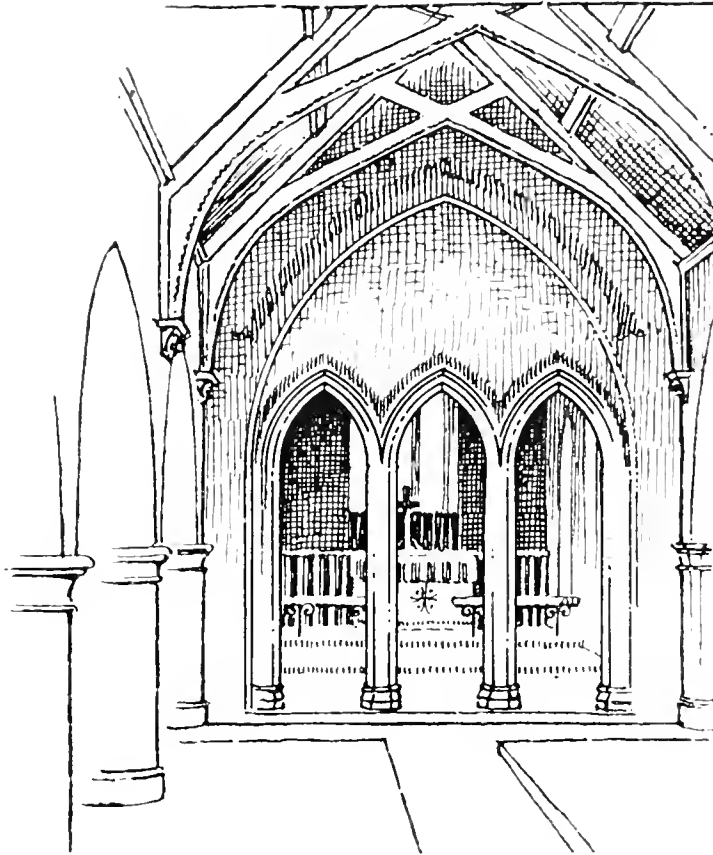


FIG. 35

related to the earlier series is that of Wool in Dorset (Fig. 35), where three pointed arches of equal size and height sustain the chancel wall.

Another and very beautiful thirteenth century instance is that of Westwell, Kent (Fig. 36), where the arcade possesses a studied and refined architectural character. Here

<sup>1</sup> Pyecombe, Patcham, and Clayton churches have it. Another, at Ovingdean, now shows the triple arcade, but this is a recent modification of the original scheme in which the side openings did not reach the floor. That at Pyecombe is believed to have been similarly treated.

the three arches, which spring from slender cylindrical shafts, 17 feet high, are trefoil-cusped, and above them upon the surface of the wall are the remains of rich medallions and carved spandrel foliations. The central arch in this example is loftier than the others.

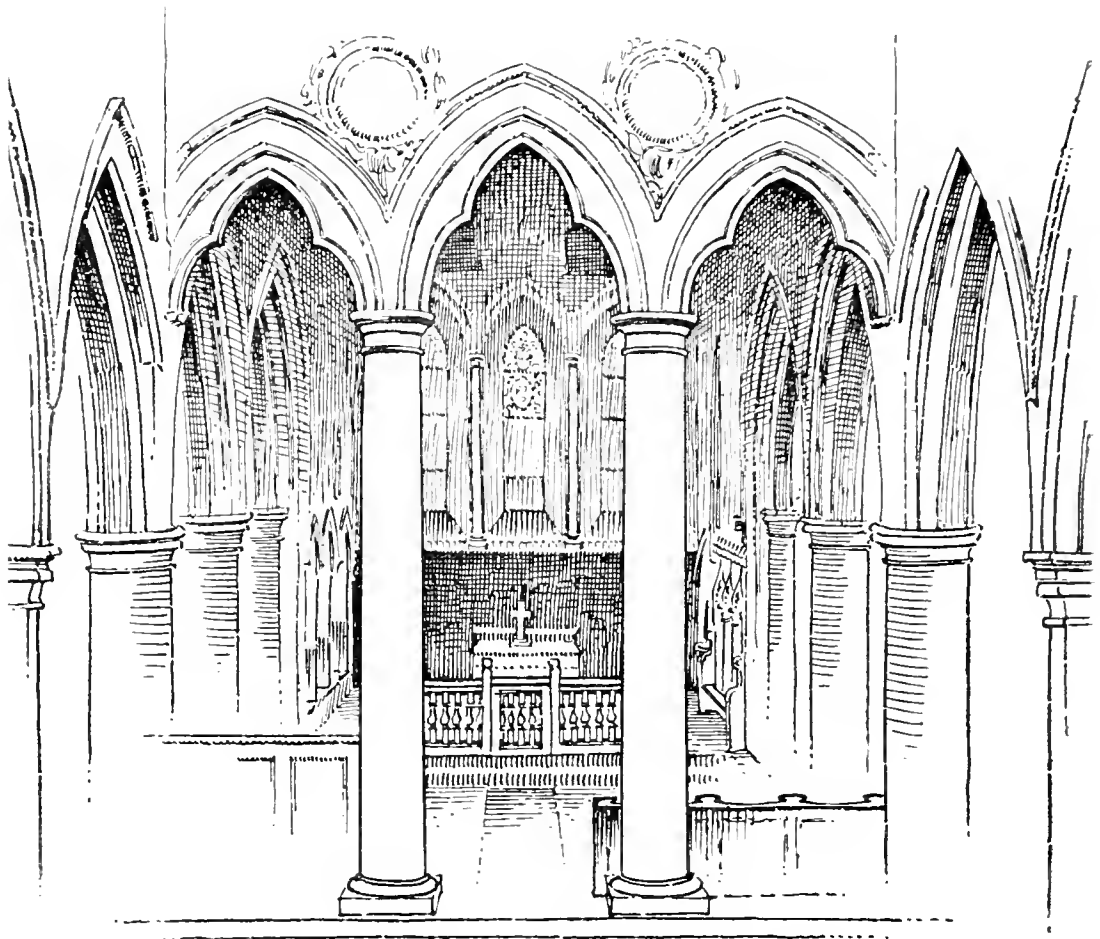


FIG. 36

Instances of a somewhat later date are to be seen at Capel-le-Ferne, Kent (Fig. 37), and at Welsh Newton in Monmouthshire (Fig. 38). In the former case the chancel wall is retained for the full height above the screen, but in the latter, the wall does not rise for more than a few feet above the arcade, its place having been taken in former times by a tympanic filling of close boarding, as far as the roof of the church. (See "Tympana.")

At Capel-le-Ferne a curious feature is noticeable. This is the open fenestration or clear window-like space in the wall above the arcade, just over the level of the former

PLATE XI A



THE ROODSCREEN : EDLESBOROUGH, BUCKS.

PLATE XI B



THE ROODSCREEN : MOBBERLEY (CHESHIRE)



roodloft gallery. It may, we think, be confidently assumed that this was designed for the reception in the first instance of the Holy Rood and figures, and secondly to serve the purpose of a hagioscope behind the Rood Altar in the loft, towards the High Altar in the sanctuary below.

A blind arch in a similar position, with the piscina by its side denoting its sacred use, is to be seen at Little Hereford (Fig. 39). Francis Bond has called attention to the curious parallel to the Capel-le-Ferne opening,<sup>1</sup> which is to be seen in the great screen of Trondhjem cathedral.

Scotland furnishes a parallel in Dunblane Cathedral, where the choir arch is surmounted by a large traceried opening. Over the chancel arch in the Cathedral of Brechin is a

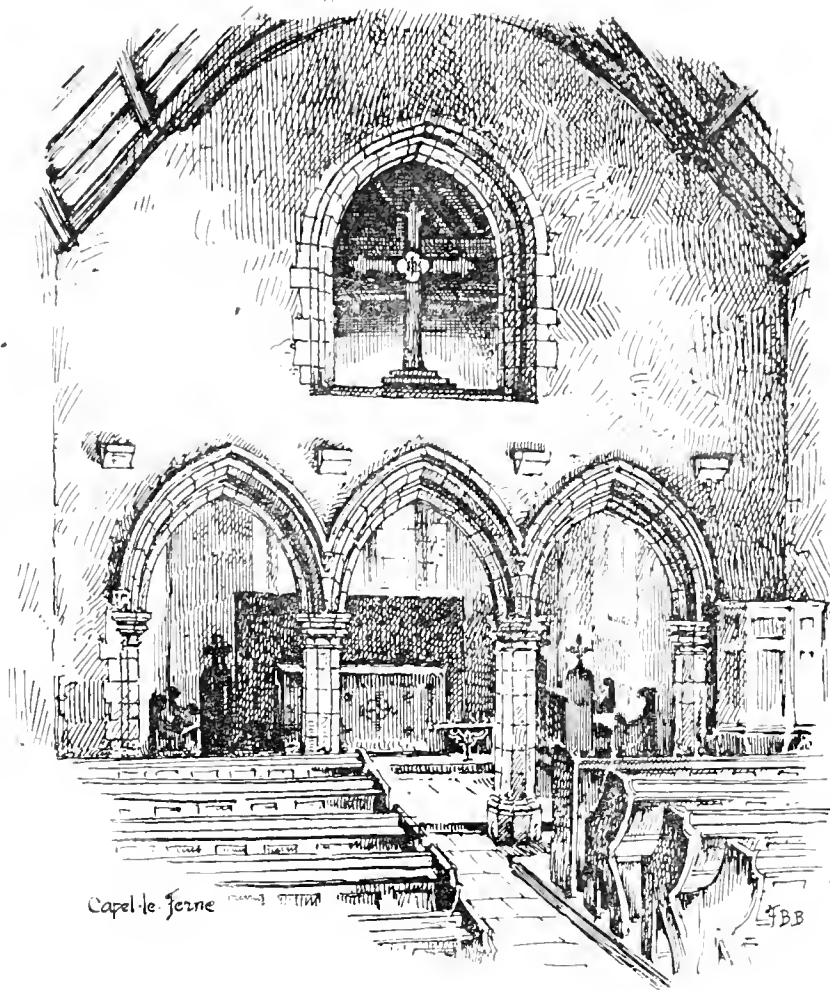


FIG. 37

pointed recess, containing a central opening, now walled up (Fig. 41), and a similar feature is observable at Lincluden.

<sup>1</sup> Sicily, a meeting-ground in the eleventh century of East and West, supplies us with some curious ecclesiological parallels in regard to work of this and the immediately succeeding period.

The island, which had been under Saracenic rule, was conquered and peacefully occupied by Norman princes, and here, as everywhere else, the men of that remarkable race showed their double prowess as architects and rulers.

In the chapel of La Martorana, Palermo, built *circa* 1143 by George of Antioch, admiral to Roger II, Norman King of Sicily, is a remarkable arrangement (Fig. 40), recalling some of the features of our early churches. The chapel, which has three naves in parallel series, is furnished with a choir-space enclosed by low marble cancelli, and beyond this the apse-wall, eastward of the central nave, is perforated by a narrow doorway, immediately above which is an arched headed opening of like width, similar in appearance to that of Capel-le-Ferne. A slight diagram is given. There is a good photograph of this chapel in the Proc. British Archæol. Assoc. xii, 1, 28 (Apr., 1908).

But, speaking of this lofty opening over the chancel entrance, it may be interesting to recall the fact that in some other churches, as at Castle Rising and Melton Constable, above the chancel arch, openings of this order appear, in the first instance triple, in the second double (Fig. 42 (A) and (B) ).

In the case of Castle Rising, the idea obviously suggests itself that here was the space

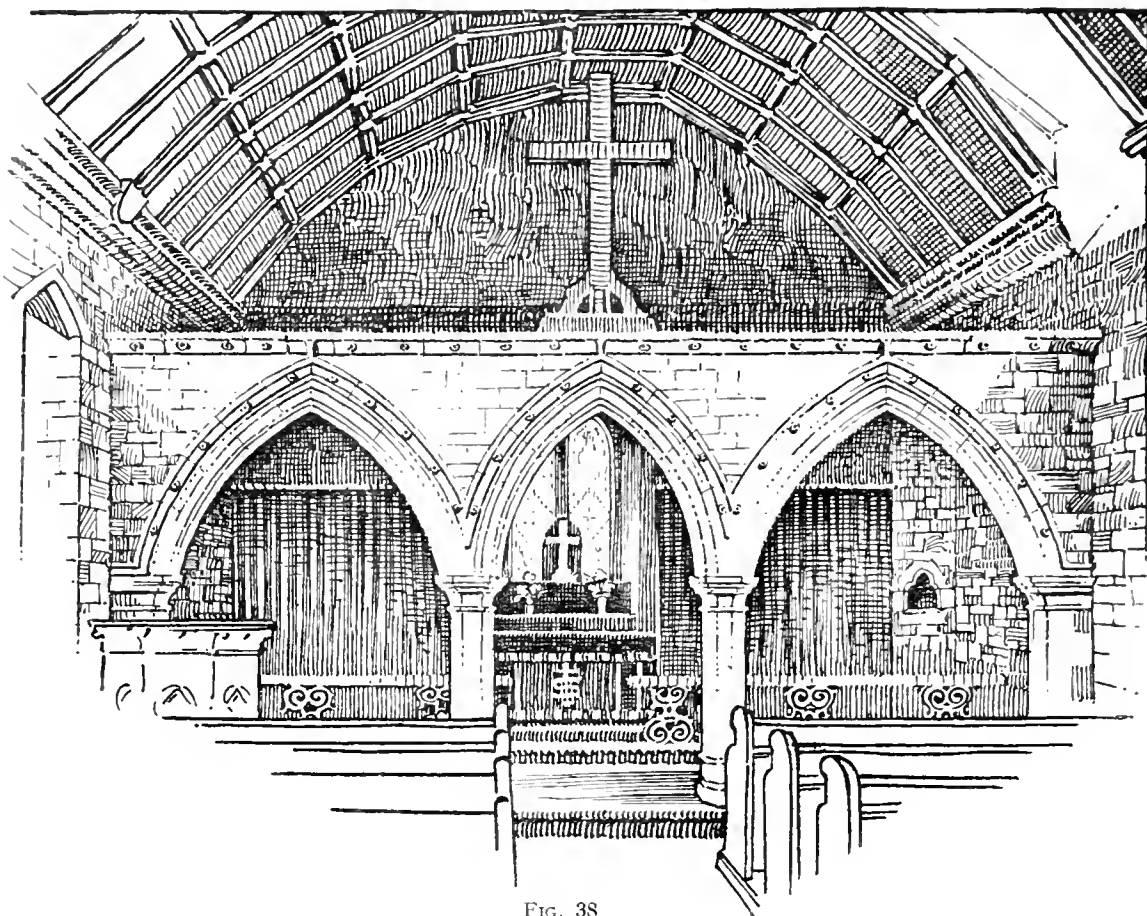


FIG. 38

allotted for the crucified figure, St. Mary, and St. John each having its own proper niche. In the case of Melton Constable, it would appear that the rood must have been laid upon the central pier, its arms lying on the flat spandrel over, whilst the openings at the side would form niches for the figures as before.

This theory of their use does at least provide an intelligible reason for the presence of these openings, and it would perhaps be less easy to suggest an alternative. At Langridge, near Bath, over the magnificent twelfth century choir archway, is a single niche with zigzag enrichments, containing a sacred figure.



## PLATE XII

DETAILS OF WOOD SCREENWORK (XIV XV CENTURIES)



(A) XIV CENTURY PANELS: HALBERTON, DEVON



(B) EARLY XV CENTURY PANELS WITH FIGURE  
PAINTINGS: SOUTHWOLD, SUFFOLK



(C) RICH LATE XIV CENTURY PANELLING IN DADO OF ROODSCREEN: MOLBERLEY, CHESHIRE



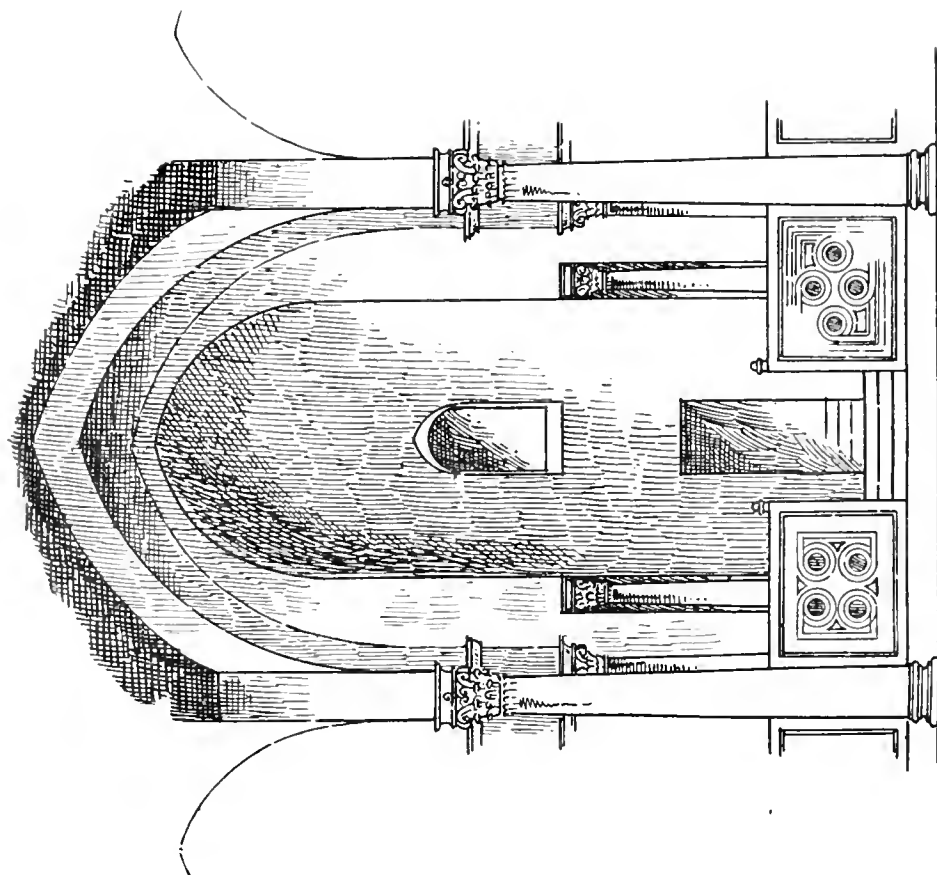


FIG. 40

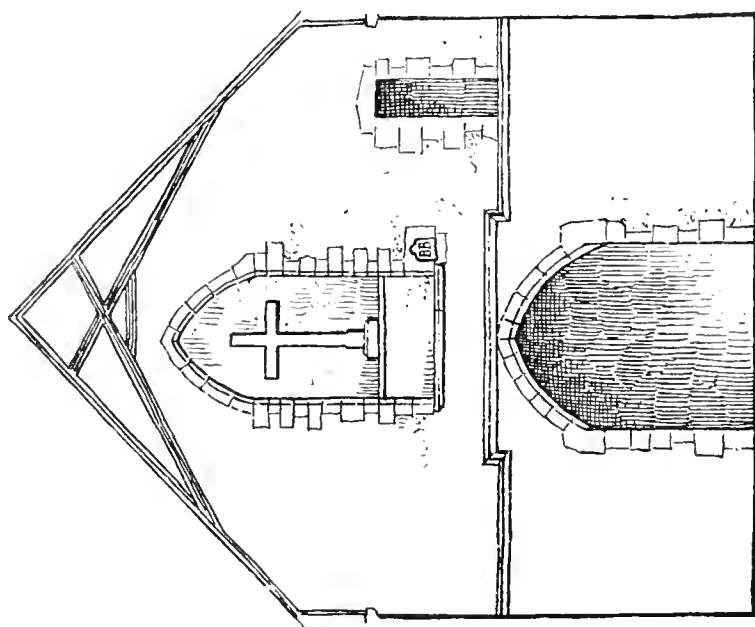


FIG. 39

§ 19. To proceed with the consideration of the triple chancel arches. The next step in their development is that in which they become frankly a screen, and nothing more. This is to be seen at Bramford, Suffolk (Fig. 43) in the very beautiful early fourteenth century example there, and in the later specimen at Bottisham, Cambs. (Fig. 44), in which the three arches are set in a framework of moulded stone, the spandrels pierced with small quatrefoils. But the perfect flower of this particular line of screen development is undoubtedly to be found in the superb architectural instances at Stebbing, and at Great Bardfield, in Essex (Plates VIIA and B). These most happily combine the principle of the triple arcade with that of the single chancel arch—a trinity in unity—and being relieved of much of their structural responsibility by the presence of the encompassing arch, present an admirable degree of lightness and refinement of design. That of

Stebbing is the older, being of the fourteenth century. Bardfield is early Perpendicular in character. In both cases the rood and figures were inwrought in the original design, and have in the latter case been replaced.

In the foregoing series, excepting Bramford, the openings run clear from the ground, and there is every reason to consider that they were anciently furnished with cancelli or lattices in the side openings and gates in the centre (at least in the earlier instances), although nothing of the sort now remains.

The reasons for assuming this to have been the case are briefly as follows :

- (1) The rule for the enclosure of choirs in the sixth century, and the need for a real barrier for order's sake.
- (2) The known use of such cancelli, which were a traditional feature in the primitive church (p. 13 *ante*).

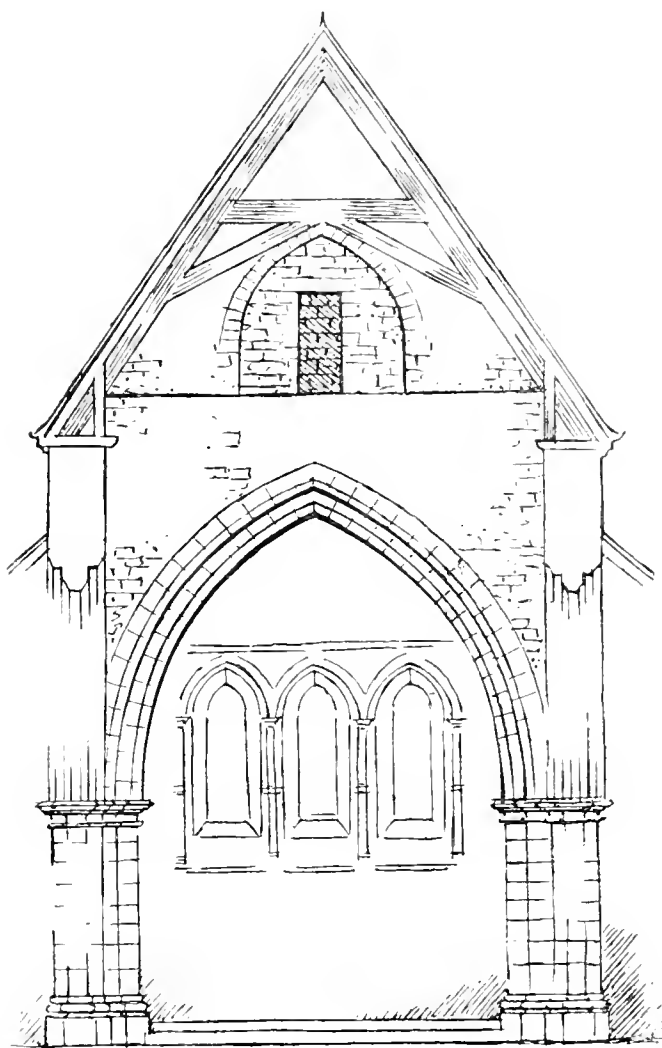
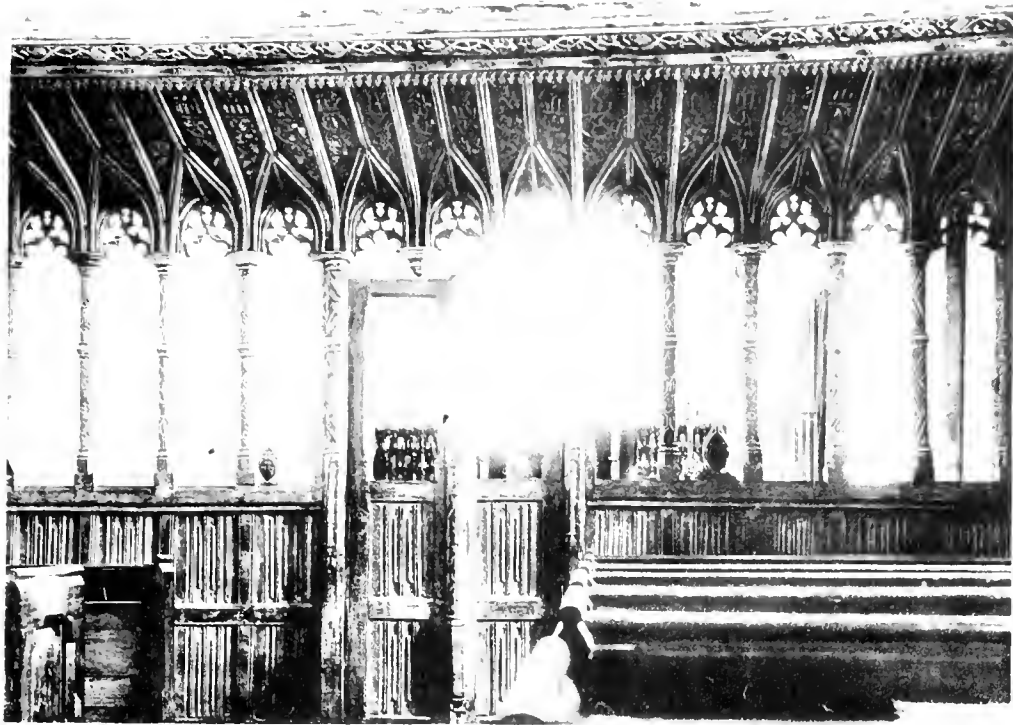
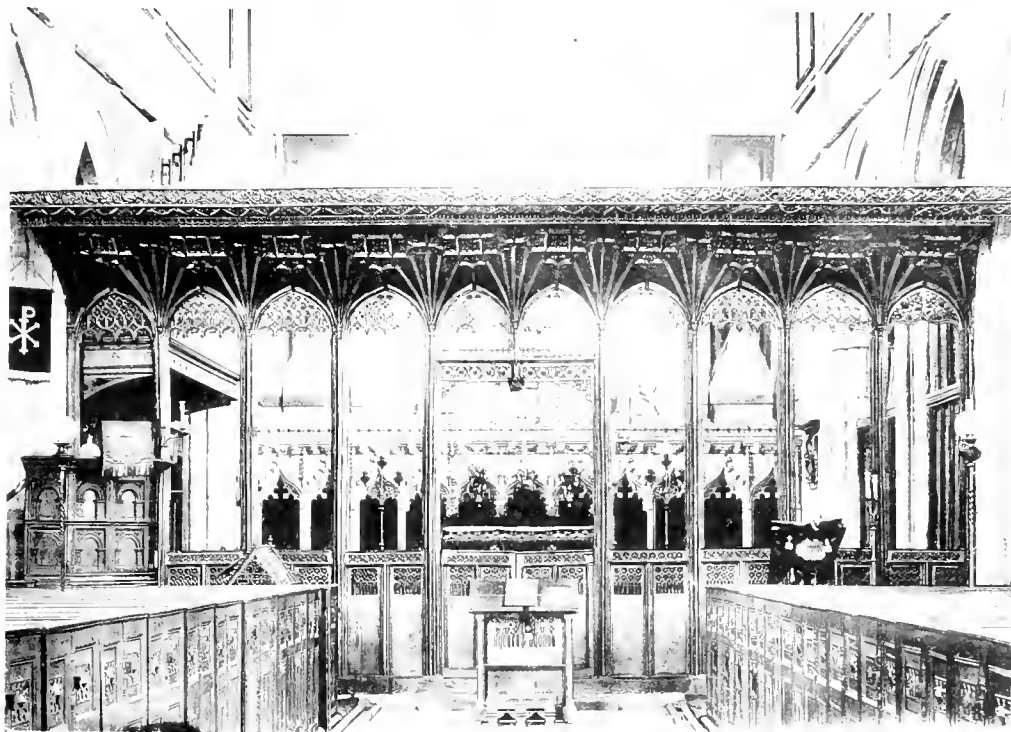


FIG. 41

PLATE XIII  
WOOD SCREENWORK, XV-XVI CENTURIES



(A) ROODSCREEN: CHARLTON-ON-OTMOOR, OXON



(B) ROODSCREEN: ASTBURY, CHESHIRE



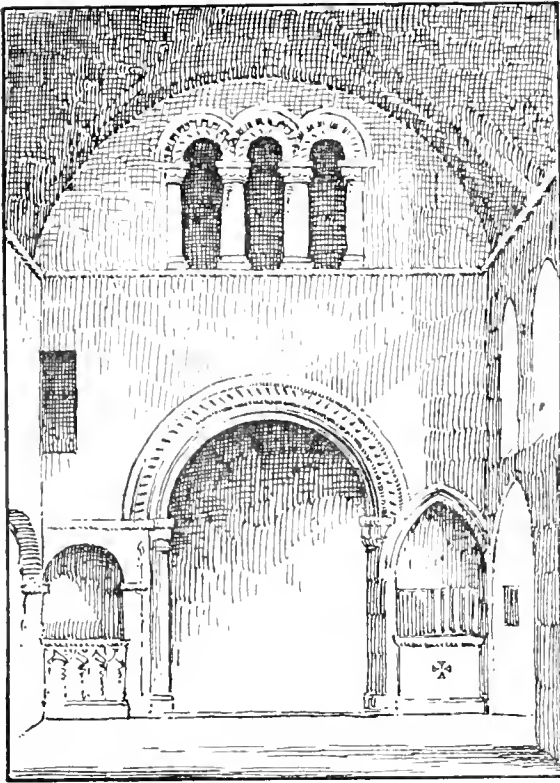


FIG. 42A

Cambridge (Fig. 45) is a chancel screen of wood having three openings, the lights clear, the heads arched and enriched with feathered cusping. This is of the fourteenth century. There are numerous wooden screens in Wales which exhibit the same influence. They show a rough suggestion of an arcade in timber-framing with curved brackets, and are usually double, being designed for the support of a roodloft. A very fine specimen of this kind remains at Llanclieu, Diagram Sheet B, Fig. 6. A most curious example was surviving in 1810 at Llangetho (Cardigan), of which

- (3) The evidence of the use of the cancelli as surviving in later screenwork (argument of continuity).
- (4) The existence of stone-built breast walls in the lateral openings in many examples of a kindred class of screen.

Other varieties of stone screenwork exhibit the same idea of the triple arcade. In Compton Bassett (Wilts) we see it in perfection, combined with a screen of another order (Plate XLIB). The same is to be seen at Le Folgöet, Brittany—almost a sister screen to the last, as regards general type, and even in our wooden screenwork the same feeling is reproduced. At Triplow, near

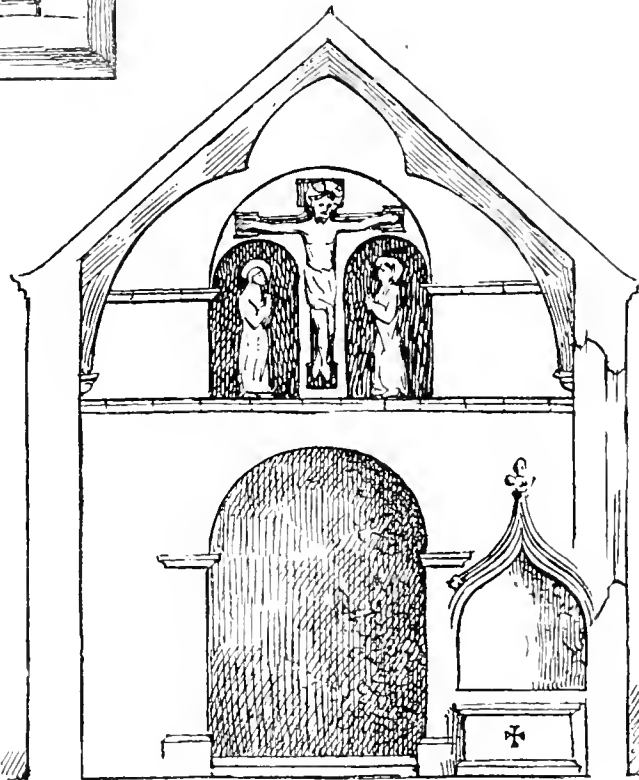


FIG. 42B

a sketch is given (Fig. 46).<sup>1</sup> Others, now swept away, are noted in old archæological works. At Bronllys the arcade to the east was replaced by the chancel wall. The same feature may be seen at Strensham (Worcestershire), and St. Margaret's,

Herefordshire (Plate XXXA). The roodloft screen at Hullavington (North Wilts) shows three plain openings. It is of early fourteenth century work.

§ 20. This brings us to the consideration of another variant of the choir arcade.

In this the lateral openings are either filled up to the height of a few feet with a solid stone wall, or marble slab, as in the case of the sanctuary screen of the Church of St. Januarius in the catacombs of Naples—a third century prototype of some found here (Fig. 47; also see Diagram Sheet B, Fig. 1); or else they take the form of

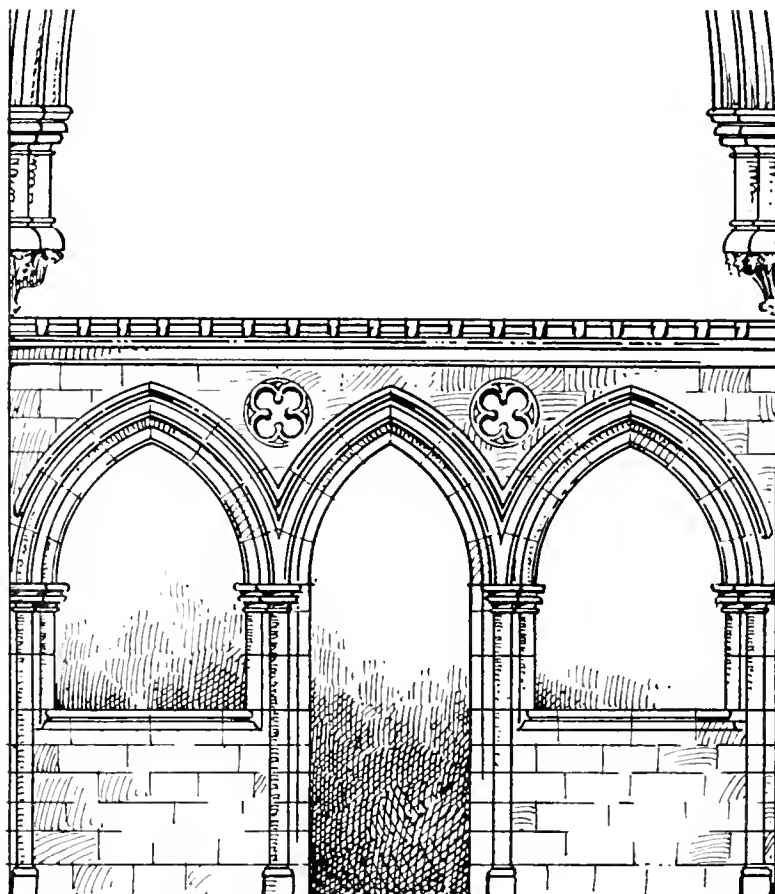


FIG. 43

window-like openings, and start from a height of some four feet or thereabouts from the nave floor). An early instance of this type is given in Fig. 32 (Church of Sion, Valley of Aténi, Georgia, where the openings are five in number. This dates from the ninth century. Coming to England we have a probable indication of the same feature in the ruined church of St. Pancras, Canterbury, and at Brixworth it seems likely that the same rule held good. In most cases where these low walls were employed, altars were affixed to them, or abutted against them, and this we

<sup>1</sup> Illustrated and described in Mayrick's "Cardiganshire."





PAIGNTON CHURCH, DEVON  
STONE MONUMENTAL SCREEN OF THE XVI CENTURY TO THE KIRKHAM CHAPEL



believe to have been the rule in later examples which remain to us now only in a mutilated state.<sup>1</sup>

We have an interesting example of this type of chancel screen at Ashley, Hants (Fig. 48 and Sheet B Fig. 3), dating from about the twelfth century—and there is, or was, a very fine specimen of thirteenth century date at Otterbourne, Hants. (Fig. 49 and Sheet B, Fig. 4), which has quite a finished architectural character. The best of this class in point of architectural merit is the screen of Bramford, above-mentioned (Fig. 43 and B, Fig. 5). In all these, however, the altars have disappeared.

§ 21. We now approach the meeting point of two streams of ecclesiological tendency—that which we have

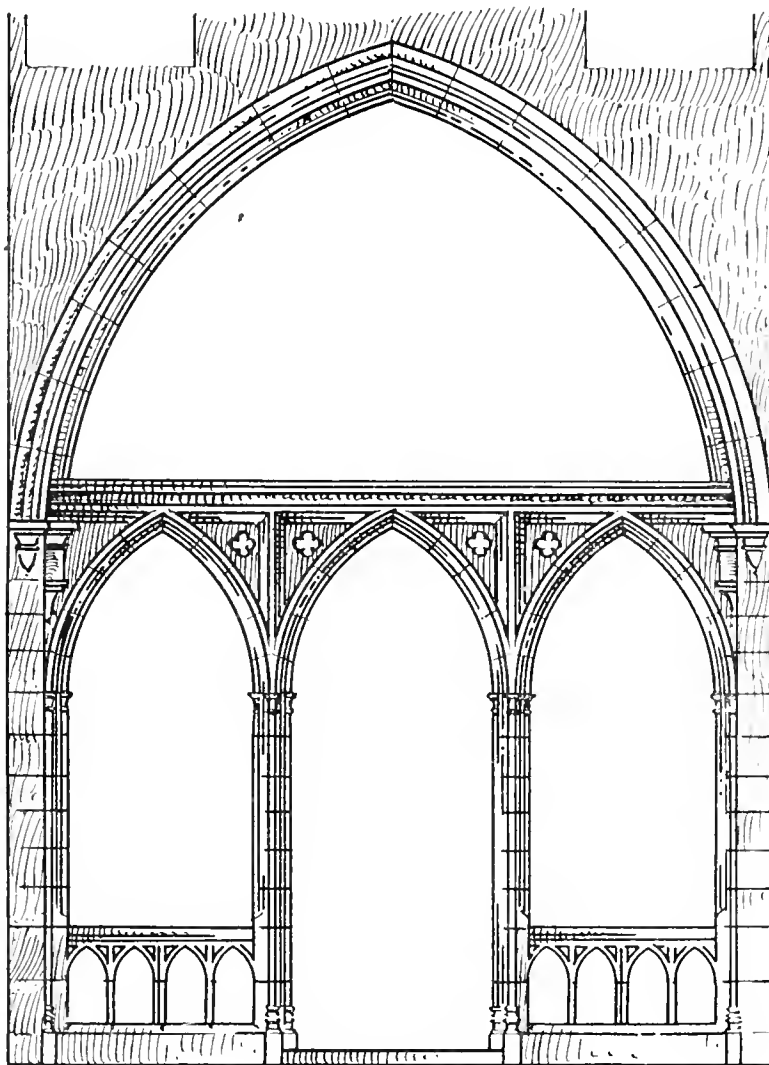


FIG. 44

<sup>1</sup> The ruins of the Church of St. Pancras, Canterbury, seem to show that there existed a low wall between the piers enclosing the lateral arches. From the twelfth century onward the custom of placing altars on each side of the chancel opening seems to have been fairly established, and to have become, in the merely parochial type of church, an ordinary feature. Many of our churches which have lost these altars, retain still the piscinæ in the walls north and south of the chancel which testify to their former presence. Such we may see at Winterbourne Monkton, Wilts, or Scawton, Yorks (Figs. 54 and 57), and many are mentioned by Bloxam and other writers.

In other churches indications of their original existence remain in the shape of decorations in fresco on the wall space by the sides of the chancel arch. Fresco was one of the earlier forms of altar back. An excellent and well-preserved painting of this kind was discovered not long since at Hauxton, and there is fresco work in a similar position at Alveston, in Gloucestershire. The Hauxton painting represents St. Thomas of Canterbury.

been following merging here with another, to whose source we must return in order to trace the connection.

The prevalent Saxon type of church had, as will be remembered, a single opening of small proportions in the sanctuary wall, such as we see at Bradford-on-Avon.

This served its purpose well enough as long as the mystic rite of the early closed church persisted, but when by the twelfth century the sanctuaries had been opened up, and the Act of Consecration was no longer veiled, the Host being elevated in view

of the congregation, it becomes evident that something had then to be done to remove, in so far as was structurally possible or convenient, the solid obscurity of the chancel barrier in churches having the restricted opening, and this was done by breaking through the wall on each side of the archway, thus forming small hagioscopes or accessory openings.

We find these at first very roughly formed. At Baulking, Berks, are early examples, quite of a make-shift character (Fig. 50 and Sheet C, No. 2). Those at Bracebridge are interesting as one is more carefully shaped (Fig. 51 and Sheet C, No. 3). At Stockton, Wilts (Fig. 52), the hagioscopes are of small size but perfectly formed. The openings are framed by pointed arches, and are cut slantwise through the wall. The rebate of the doorway is towards the west, and there are indications that another screen

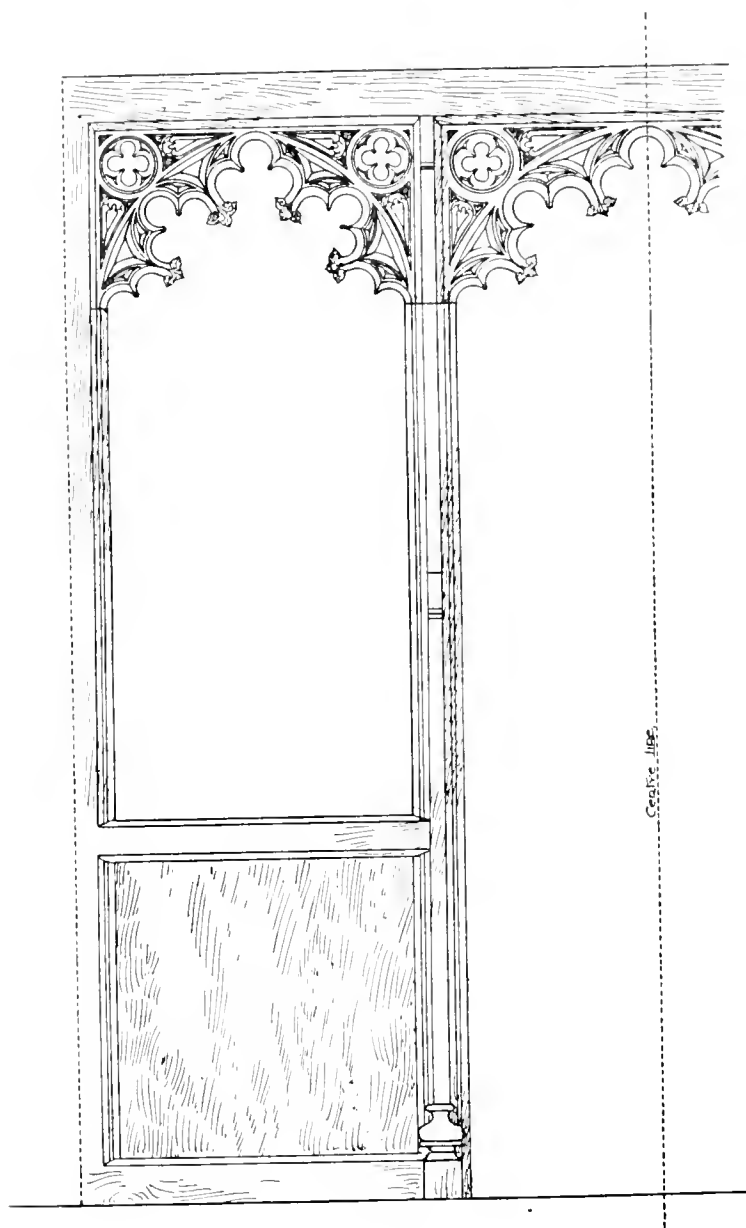
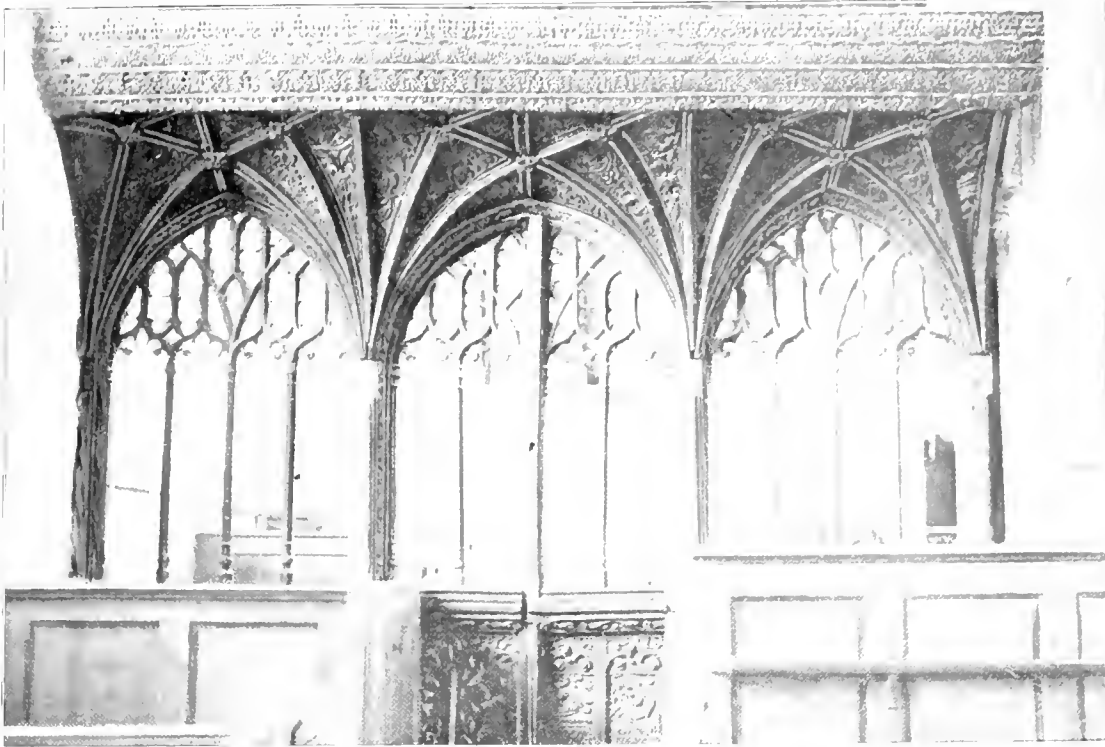


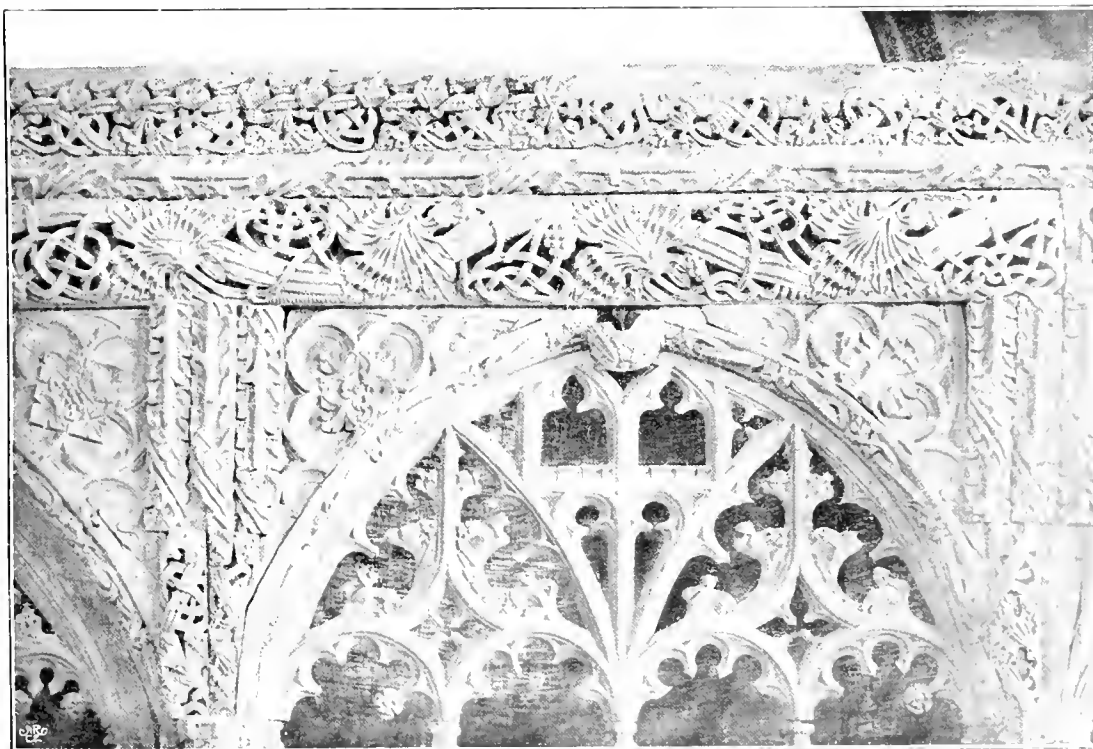
FIG. 45

# PLATE XV

## WOOD SCREENWORK WEST COUNTRY TYPE



(A) MARWOOD: N. DEVON. XVI CENTURY



(B) SOUTH POOL: S. DEVON. LATE XV CENTURY

N.B.—The cornice enrichments and fragments of the vaultings are here seen roughly attached to the face of the screen. This was done in numerous instances in Devon after the destruction of the roodlofts and bressummers.



of lighter character would have originally fronted it, making a combination of the same order as Compton Bassett.

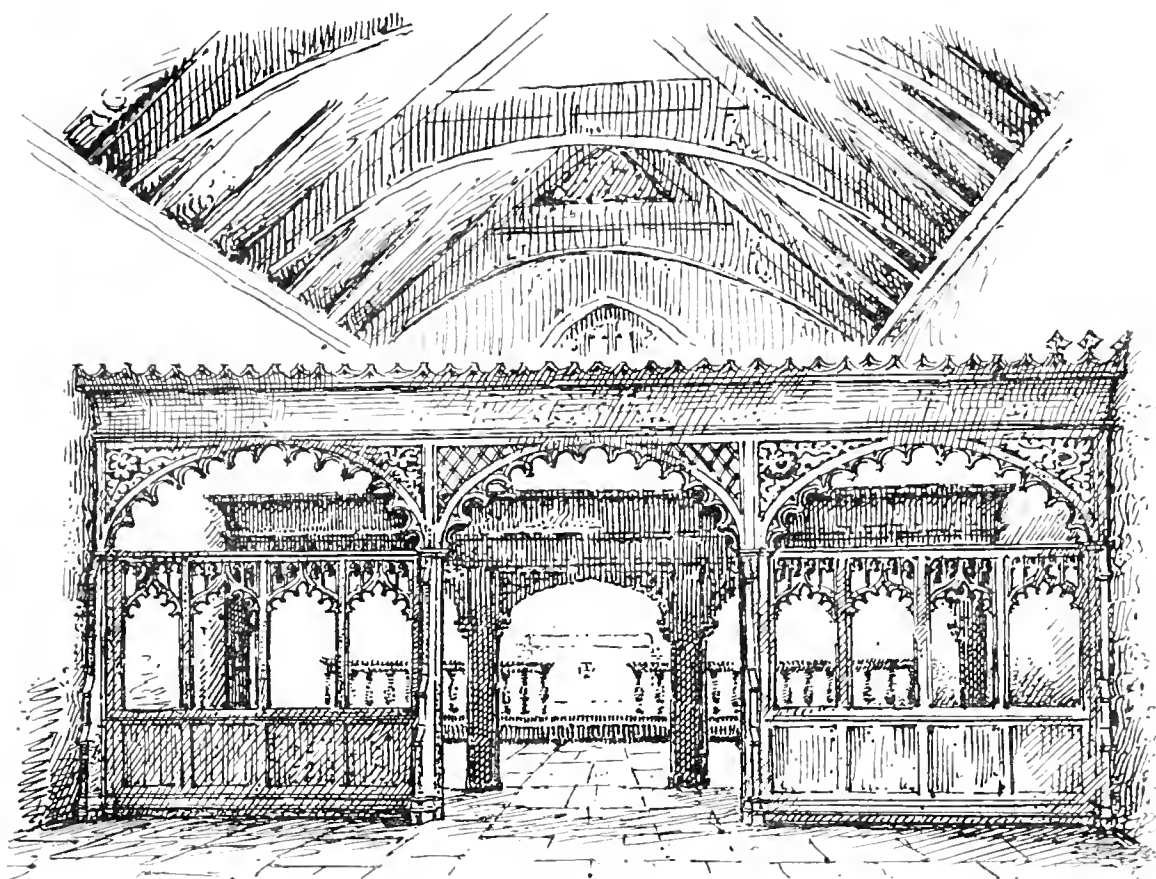


FIG. 46

Other instances of the same kind are fairly plentiful, and some will probably be familiar to our readers. From these it is but a step to those larger and more regularly-formed openings which we have already observed in the cases of Ashley and Otterbourne, and these might be quite as legitimately appended to this series (C) as to the last—were it not that their larger size seems to place them more properly in the former category.

These small hagioscopes of the type C (which again we have in common with the Oriental churches)<sup>1</sup> are to be found in abundance in our later churches, and even when the choir arch was much increased in size, it was often customary to add them. After the thirteenth century, they begin to receive more careful treatment, and are fenestrated,

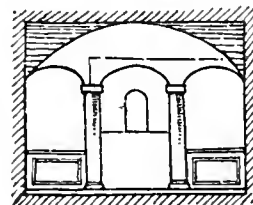


FIG. 47

<sup>1</sup> See illustration, Plate IV, of the same arrangement in a Coptic church of Cairo.

divided into separate lights by small mullions, and tracery heads are sometimes added—so that they become perfect little windows. See, for example, the diagram given of that of Poltimore (Sheet C, No. 5). In this case the hagioscopes are small, the arch relatively speaking large, but in many other instances, as at Curdworth, Warwick (Fig. 53 and C, No. 6), Winterbourne Monkton, Wilts (Fig. 54 and C, No. 7), and Sandridge, Herts (Fig. 55 and C, No. 8), their proportions are reversed, and we have

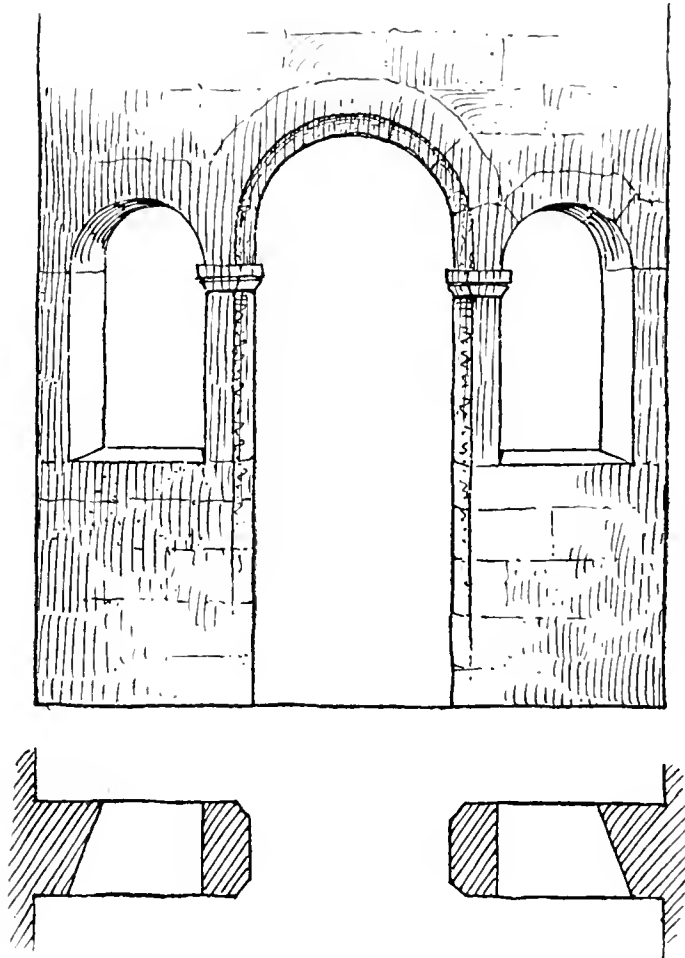
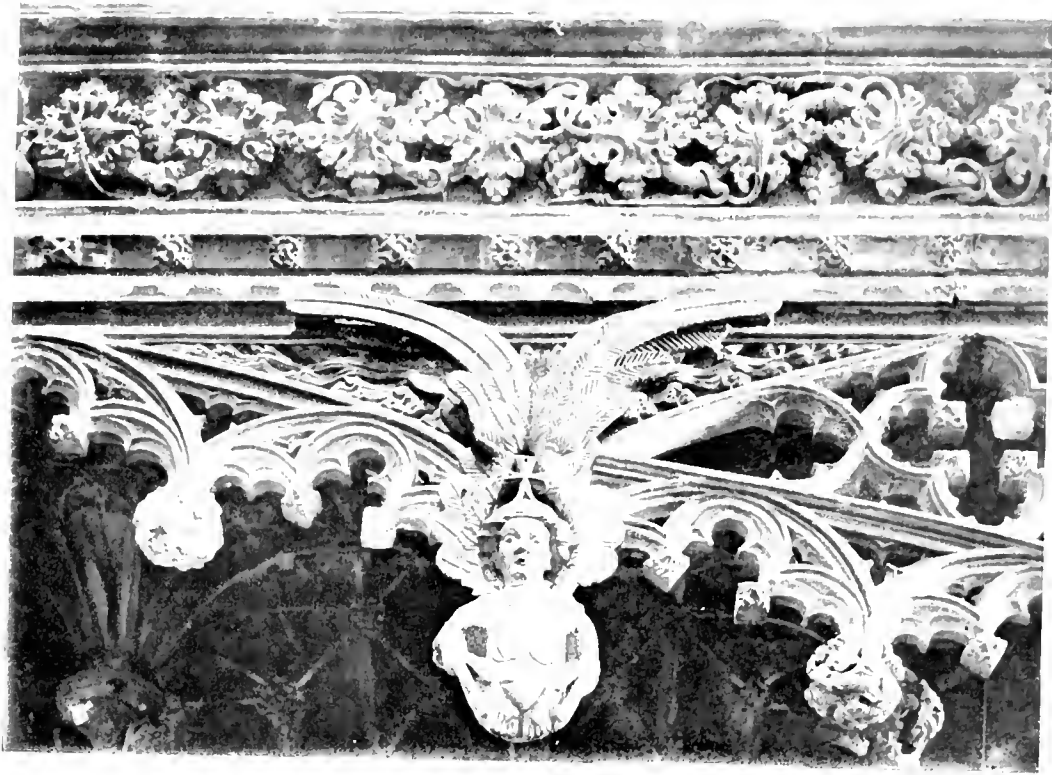


FIG. 48

quite a small central doorway with larger hagioscopes of several lights. In later instances, as at Highway, North Wilts (Fig. 56 and C, No. 9), the omission of the upper section of wall gives us the stone chancel screen, at first a solid piece of masonry with architectural features few and bold, but later refined into such delicate and perfect compositions as Compton Bassett, Wilts (Plate XLIIb), and Totnes, Devon, supply.



PLATE XVI



(A) WELLS CATHEDRAL DETAILS OF STONE SCREENWORK



(B) PAIGTON? CANOPIED HEAD OF STONE SCREEN



§ 22. Occasionally, in the early churches, we find instances in which something like a triple arcade with lateral altars is suggested, but instead of the side arches being open above the altars, they are mere recesses. This type is found at Nola, South Italy, and there, in the chapel of the Blessed Martyrs, exists perhaps the earliest surviving model of the kind (Fig. 34 and D, No. 1). The arched recesses over the altars are here filled with frescoes or mosaics. The resemblance to some English

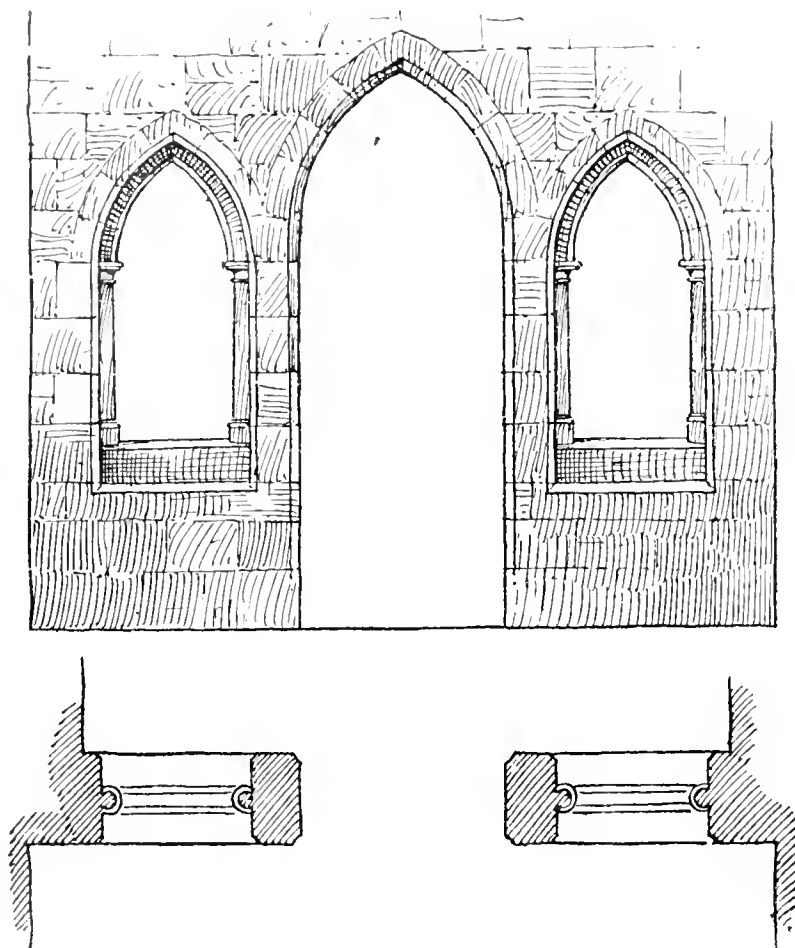


FIG. 49

examples is striking. Particularly does its general arrangement recall that of Brixworth (Fig. 32 *ante*). Other English parallels are those of Hauxton, Cambs. (Sheet D, No. 2), or Scawton, Yorks (Fig. 57 and D, 3), in the latter of which it will be noticed that the original design has been modified by the cutting of hagioscopes through the wall at the back of the recesses. At South Shoebury, Essex (D, No. 4), are two large recesses of this sort for altar backs, and these appear to be of thirteenth century date.

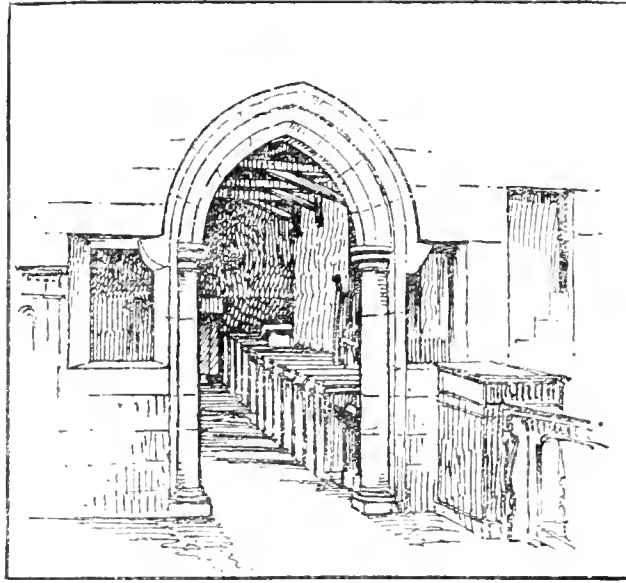


FIG. 50

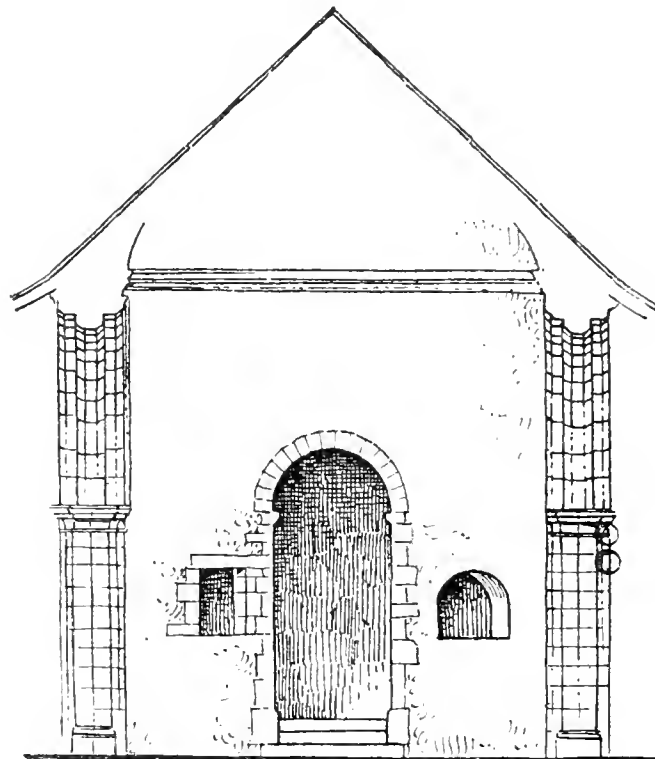


FIG. 51

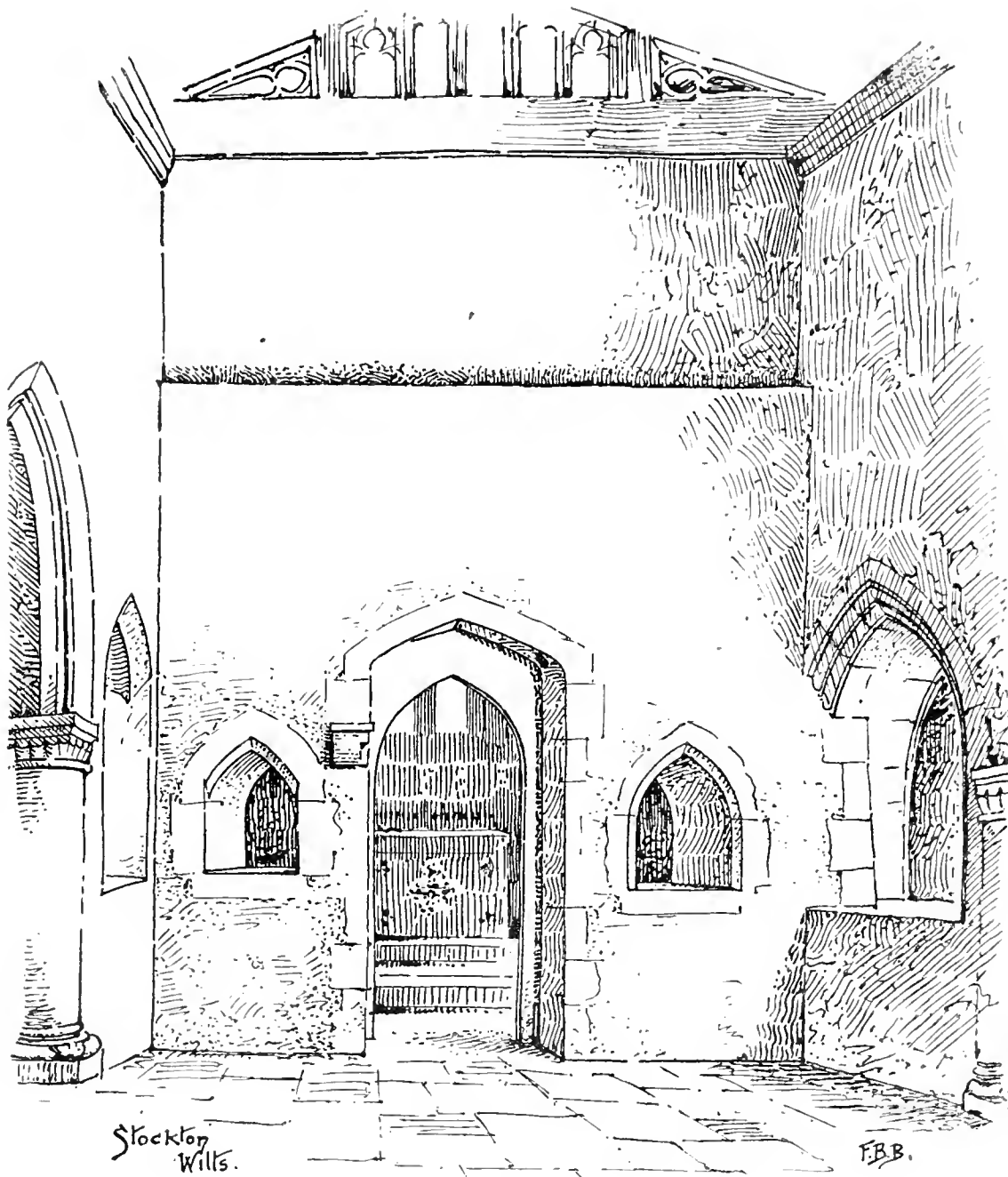


FIG. 52

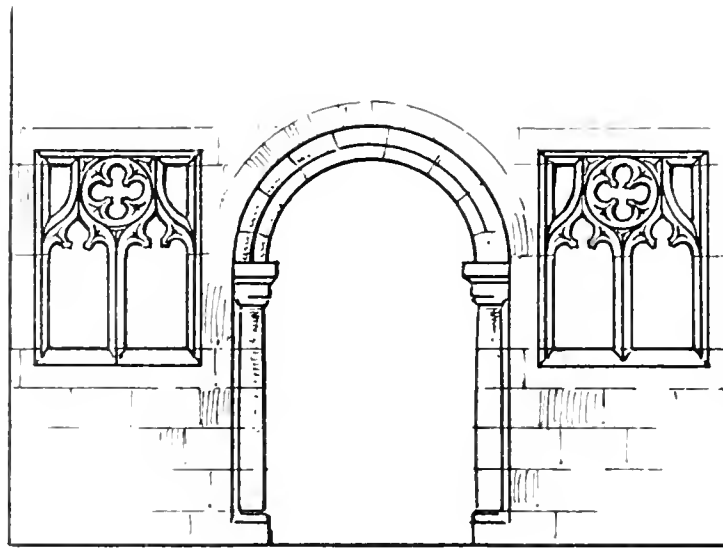


FIG. 53

CHANCEL ARCH AND TRACERIED HAGIOSCOPES AT CURDWORTH, WARWICKSHIRE

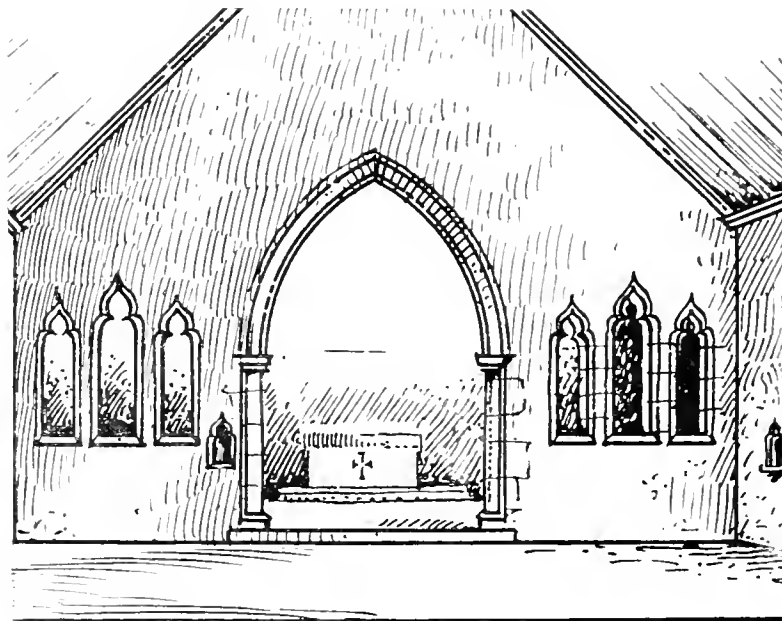
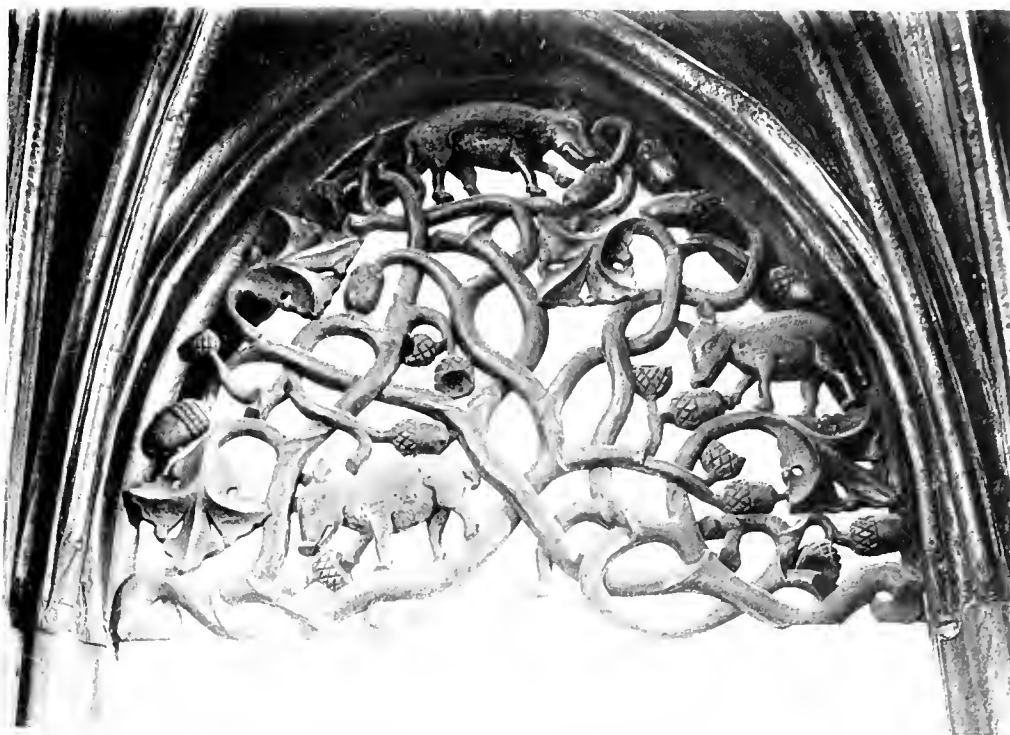


FIG. 54

CHANCEL ARCH, WITH HAGIOSCOPES AND PISCINÆ FOR LATERAL ALTARS AT  
WINTERBOURNE MONCKTON, WILTS

## PLATE XVII

WOOD SCREENWORK OF THE LATER PERIOD (XVI CENTURY)  
VARIETIES OF DETAIL



(A) FROM RODSCREEN: LLANRWST, DENBIGH



(B) FROM BISHOP SALKELD'S CHAPEL CARLISLE CATHEDRAL





In some cases, as at Urishay, Herefordshire (where the altars are still standing) no arched recesses are seen, neither are there any hagioscopes to supplement the arch.

In this case, and at Llanfilo (Brecknock), (Plate XXXB), St. Margaret's (Plate XXXA), and some others, the head of the chancel arch was concealed by the roodloft, nothing being visible but a square opening, filled originally by a screen.

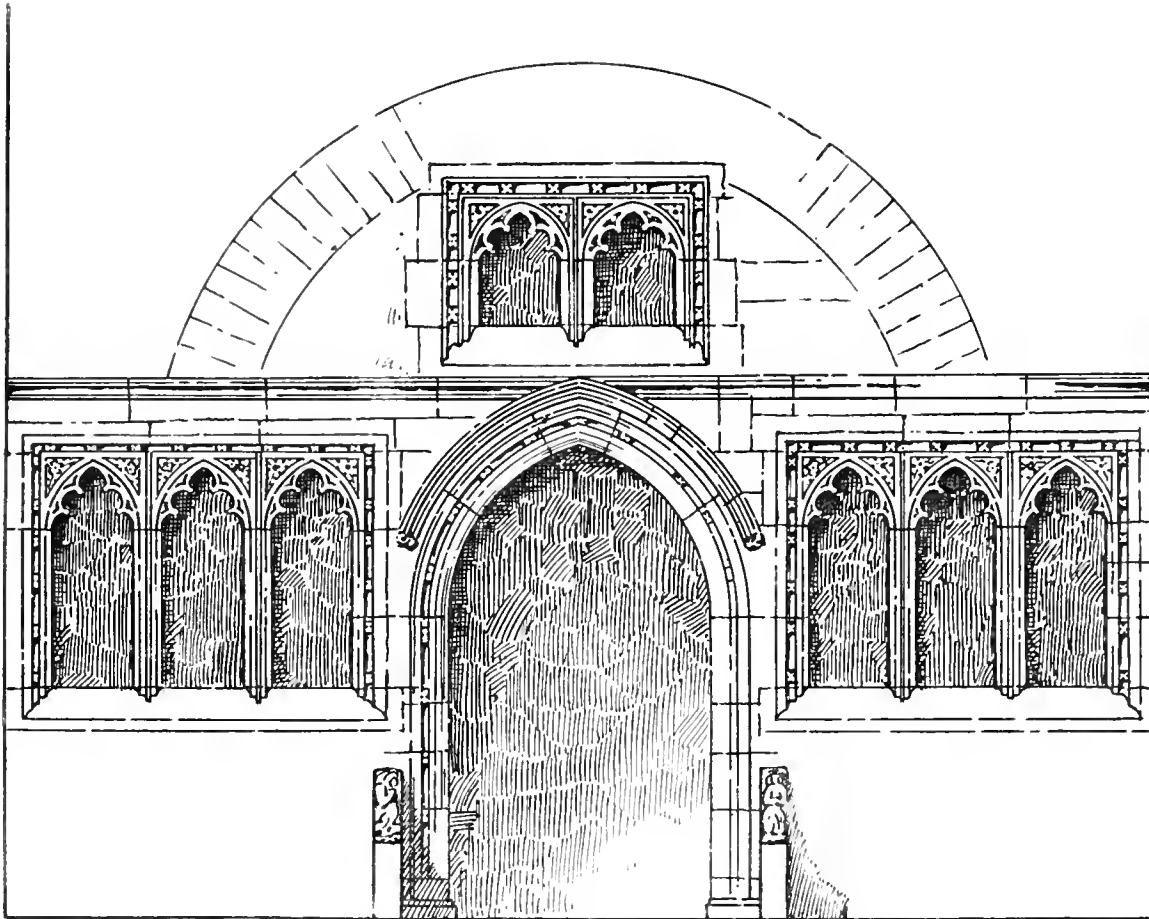


FIG. 55

Following this we have such instances as Little Hereford, and other like cases, where a great breadth of wall is observable on each side of the narrow chancel arch. That this formerly had altars attached, there can be no doubt whatever.

At Eartham, Sussex, the blank arched recesses have been pierced to supplement the limited dimensions of the chancel arch. From these early instances we trace the connection to later ones of the Ranworth type (D, No. 5), in which the same arrangements subsist, but the chancel arch is of larger dimensions and is filled with a fine roodscreen, continued as a panelled reredos to the altars, whilst over all runs the roodloft.

Into this category fall such instances also as that of Bronllys (Brecknock) where the screen was a double one, being supported on pillars some six or seven feet out to the

west of the chancel wall—and the curious chancel partition at Sedgberrow, though differing greatly from others of the class, must nevertheless be included. This was a very strange form, and consisted of a wood-framed screen on a stone base, the whole of the framework,

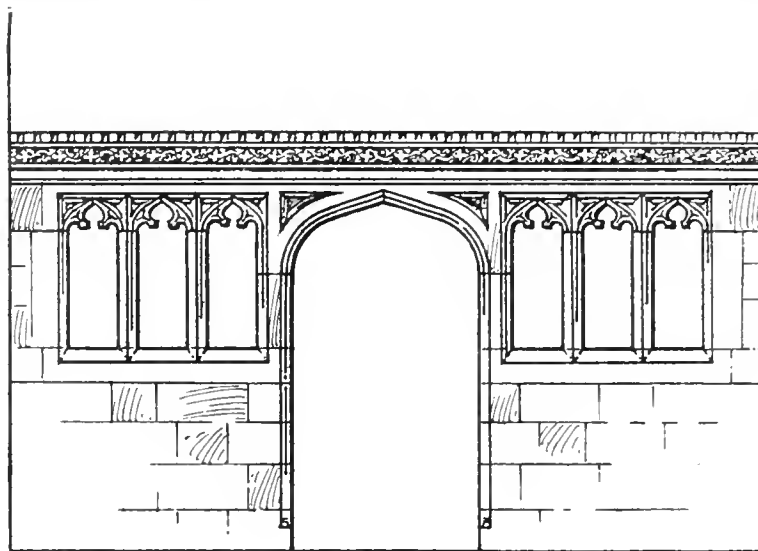


FIG. 56

excepting only the central doorway, being filled with painted boarding forming a complete barrier from roof to floor. The character of this screen was destroyed by the "restorer," Butterfield, who has taken away the boarding and left the naked ribs of the framework.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The screen in its unrestored state is described in the *Ecclesiologist*, xxiii, p. 289. See also *Archæological Journal*, Vol. VI.

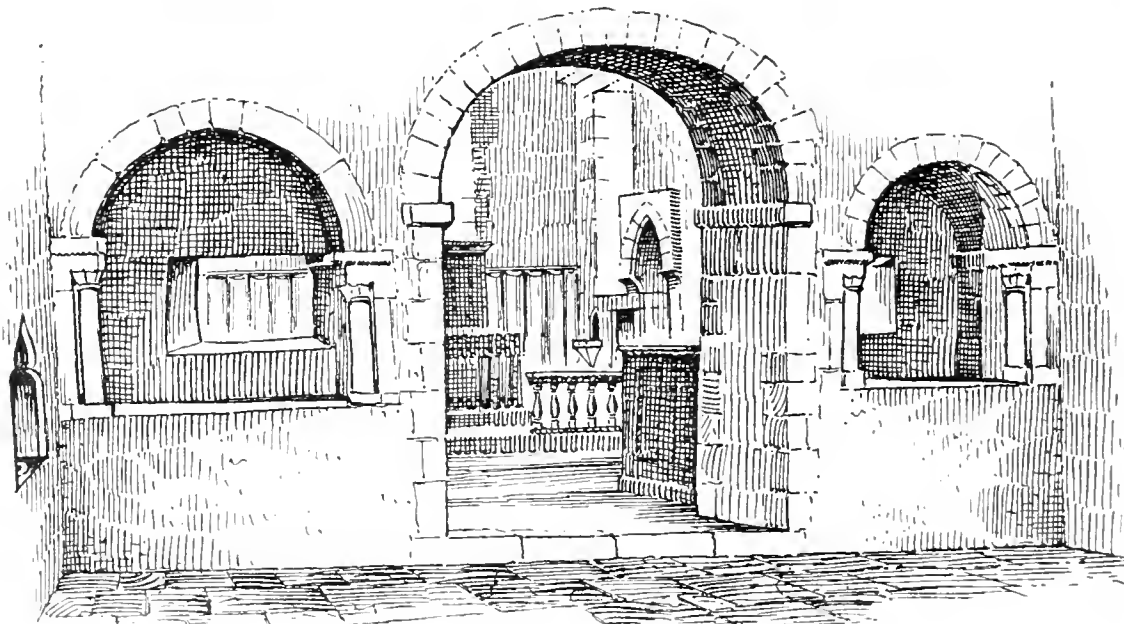
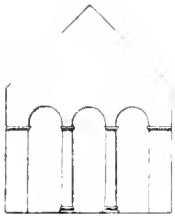


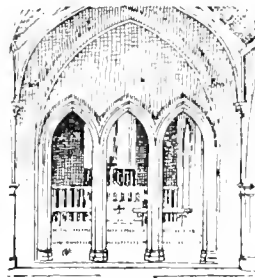
FIG. 57

# DIAGRAM SHEET "A"

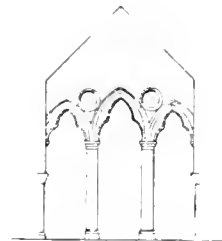
## TRIPLE CHANCEL ARCHES



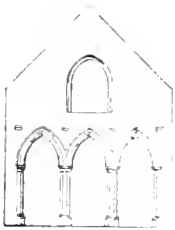
No. 1 RECVLVER



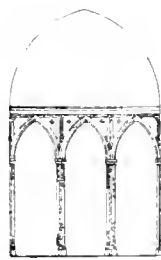
No. 2. WOOL



No. 3. WESTWELL



No. 4 CAPEL-LE-FERNE

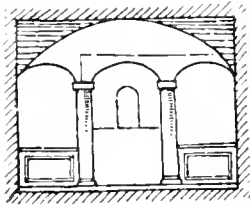


No. 5. BOTTISHAM

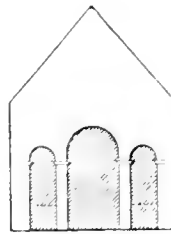


No. 6. STEBBING

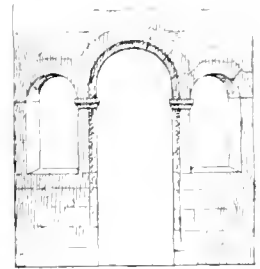
# DIAGRAM SHEET "B"



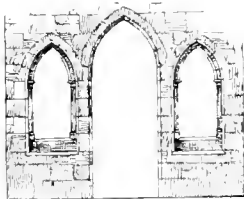
NO. 1 S. JANUARIUS, NAPLES



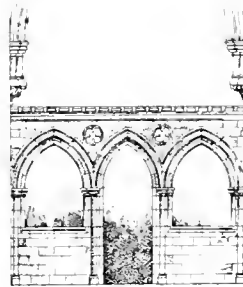
NO. 2 S. PANCRAS, CANTERBURY



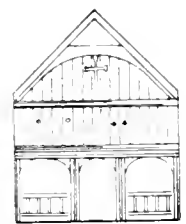
NO. 3 ASHLEY



NO. 4. OTTERBOURNE

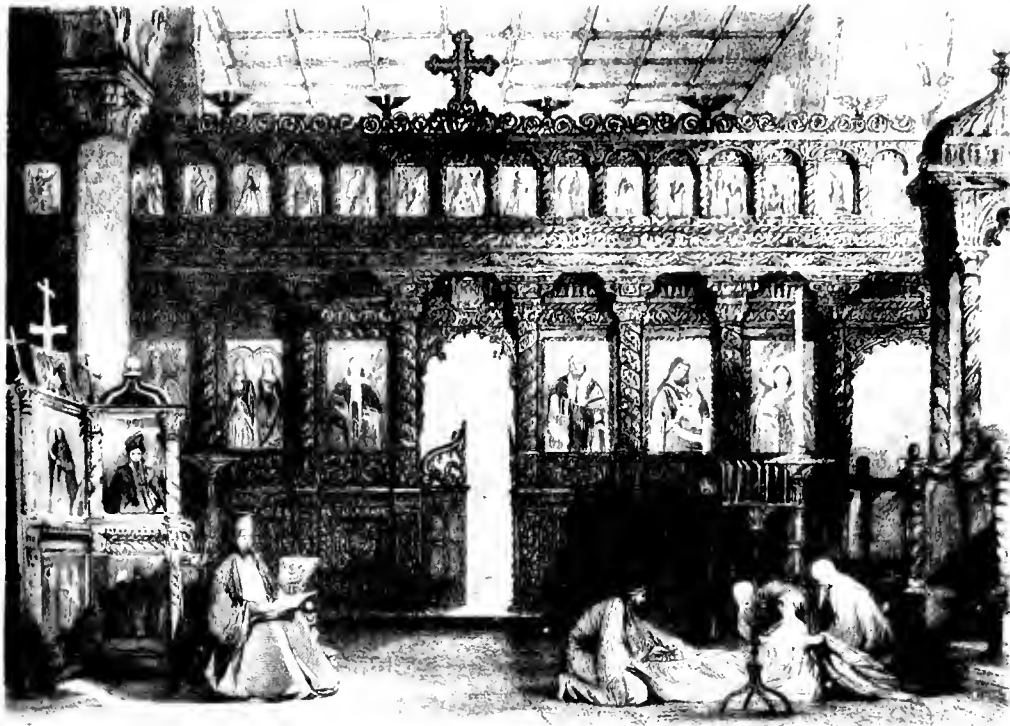


NO. 5. BRAMFORD

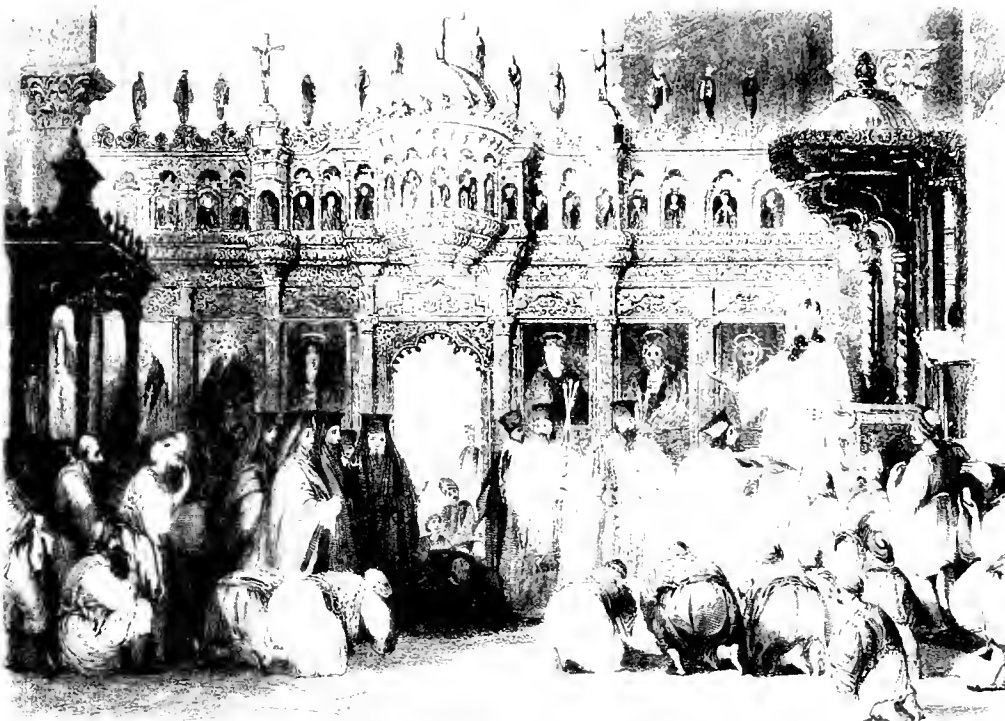


NO. 6 LLANELIEU  
(Wood Screen)

PLATE XVIII  
GREEK CHURCH ICONOSTASIS



(A) ICONOSTASIS OF PERGAMON



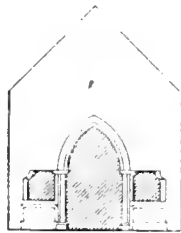
(B) ICONOSTASIS IN THE CATHEDRAL OF MAGNESIA, ASIA MINOR



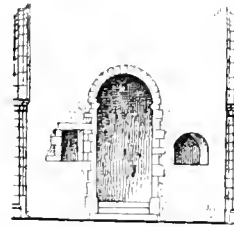
# DIAGRAM SHEET "C"



No. 1. BRADFORD-ON-AVON



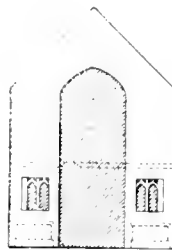
No. 2. BAULKING



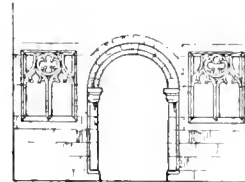
No. 3. BRACEBRIDGE



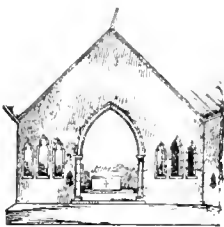
No. 4. STOCKTON



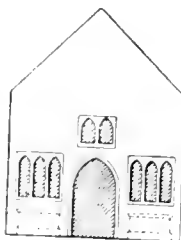
No. 5. POLTIMORE



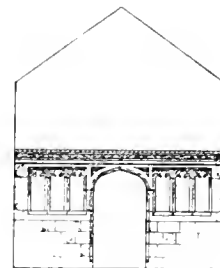
No. 6. CURDWORTH



No. 7. WINTERBOURNE MONCKTON

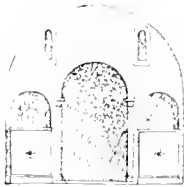


No. 8. SANDRIDGE

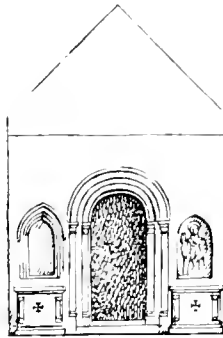


No. 9. HIGHWAY

## DIAGRAM SHEET "D"



No. 1. NOLA



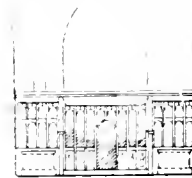
No. 2. HAUNTON



No. 3. SCAWTON



No. 4. S. SHOEBURY



No. 5. RANWORTH



## SECTION II

### MEDIÆVAL SCREENWORK

§ 23. **I**N the course of our survey of the earlier mural screenwork of England we have seen that the tendency has always been in favour of a type of chancel partition in which arched openings, three in number, are set in a solid wall. This may be contrasted with the typical Italian model, in which a row of pillars sustains a level architrave, the space above being almost invariably open to the roof. In England, the triple division, the arcuated form, and the maintenance of the upward enclosure were never lost sight of, and may be traced in numerous examples throughout the mediæval period. The triplicity of the main design may often be perceived behind the complexity of smaller subdivisions, when the advent of a more perfect wood or stone craft has led to the addition of lighter mullions and tracery, the equivalent of the "cancelli" or lattices of former times. But in the larger churches it often happens that the width cannot be compassed without the multiplication of lateral openings in the screen, and in the case of the wide aisled structures of the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries (as commonly found in Devon) the simple application of the principle is an impossibility, and the triplicity is secured only upon an extended scale by the provision of three primary openings in the screen, in the form of doorways, one in each aisle of the church.

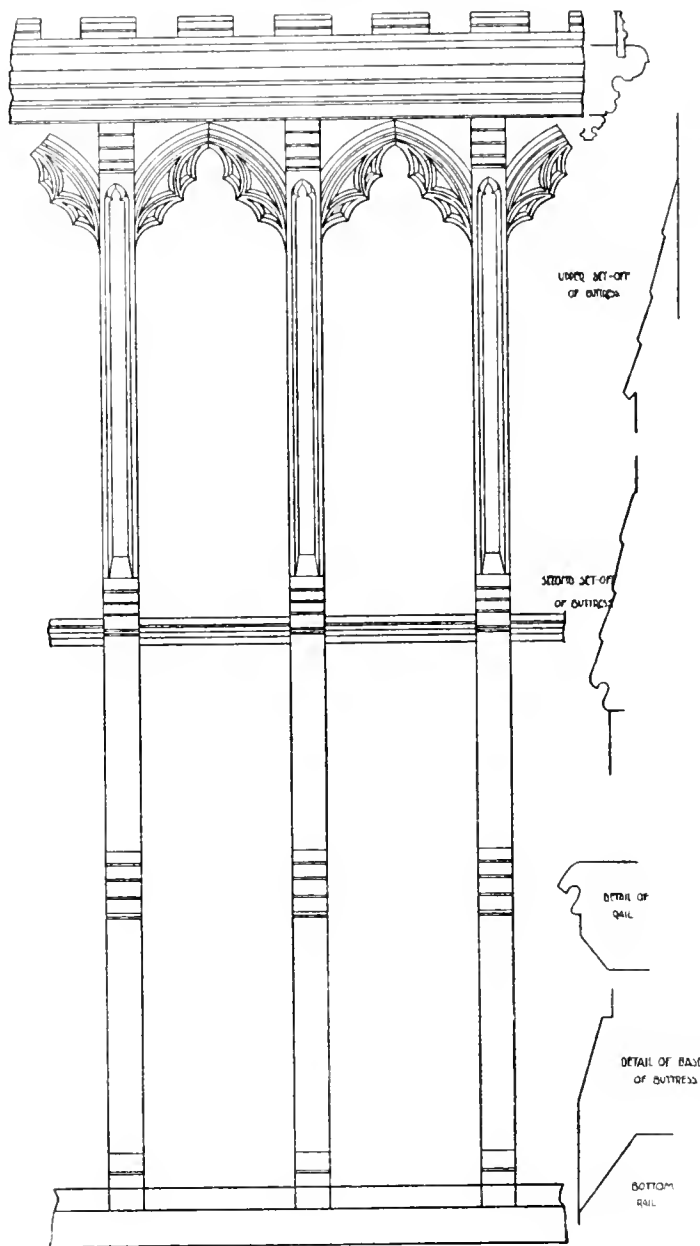
The earliest screenwork of wood which we now possess is that which forms the balustrade above the chancel arch at Compton, in Surrey, and this takes the form of a simple series of round-headed arches on little shafts with Romanesque capitals. It is probably of early twelfth century date. We have next a few representative instances of late twelfth or early thirteenth century work, and this is seen to consist of very simple arcading, as at Kirkstead Chapel, Lincs, or at Thurcaston. Perhaps the earliest and simplest is that in Rochester Cathedral, now attached to the east side of the choir screen. In these, the rows of archlets are cusped, and all sufficiently reduced in size by their multiplication to form an efficient grille.

We observe the increase of refinement and advance of skill in design and execution when we come to the rather later specimens at Stanton Harcourt (Plate VIIIb), and at Dorchester, Oxon (Fig. 58A), where the moulded shafts and buttress-form appendages to the uprights constitute an important advance in ornamental character. Yet these early screens follow in their type the stonemason's traditions rather than those of the true woodworker, pointing to a reluctance on the part of the early craftsman to abandon those habitual ideas which had become instinctive through long association; and to a want of understanding of the real nature and capabilities of wood as a medium for artistic expression in construction. Northfleet, in Kent (Fig. 58B), possesses a beautiful late

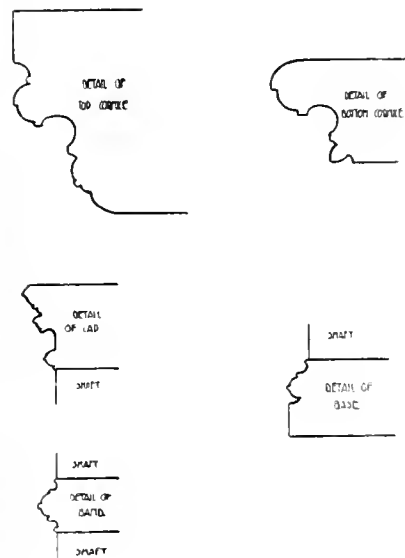
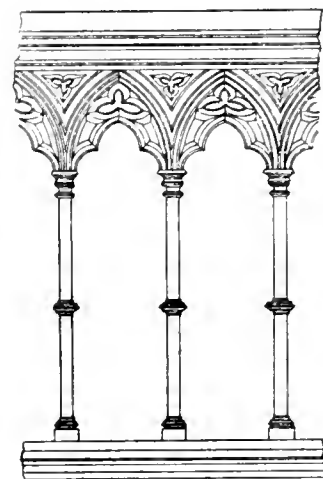
# TYPES OF EARLY SCHEENWERK.

DORCHESTER CHURCH - OZAM.

WIMBORNE CHURCH - KENT.

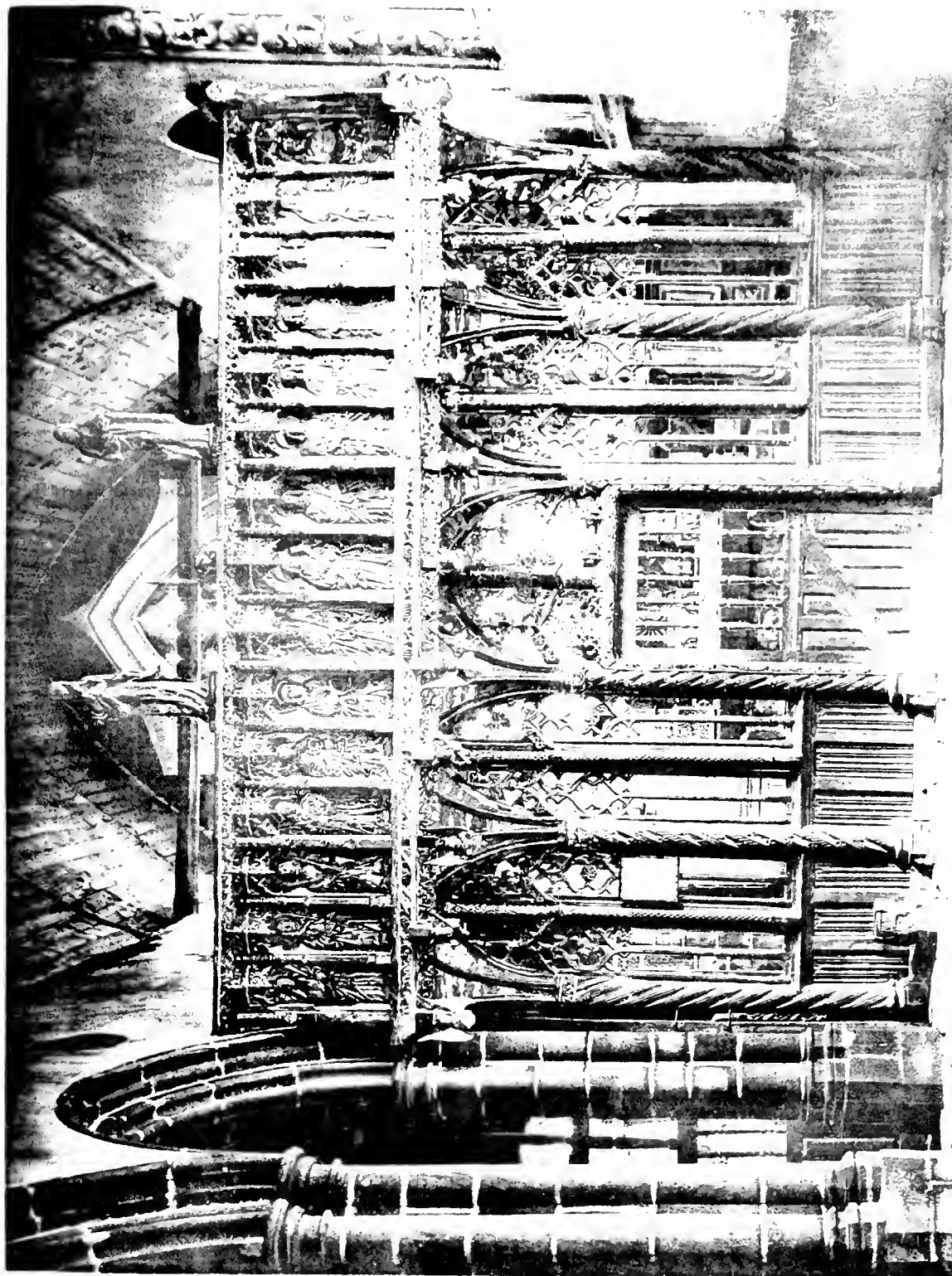


A



B

FIG. 58



ICONOSTASIS AND ROODLOFT: KERFONS, BRITTANY



thirteenth century screen, in which the openings are delicately traceried. We first observe the inclusion of tracery on an important scale in the screen of St. Mary's Hospital, Chichester (Plate VIIIA), a truly exquisite composition dating from early in the thirteenth century, and one in which for the first time the design becomes properly

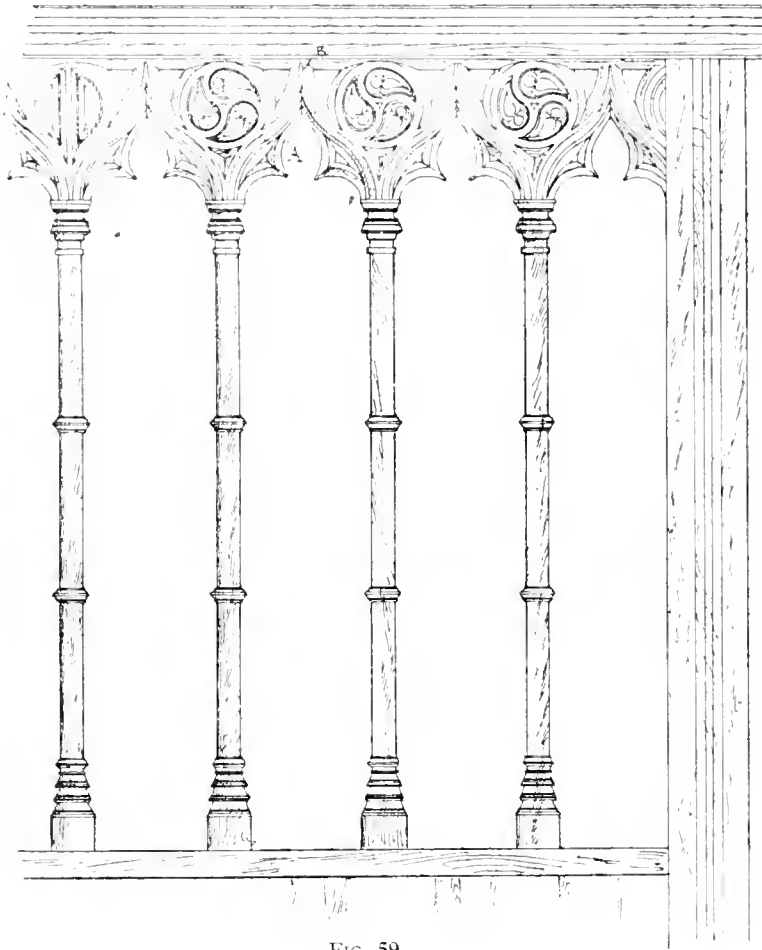


FIG. 59

characteristic of woodwork ; and a little later, when the geometric fashions of design yield to the curvilinear we have such instances as the parclose screens of Ewerby, Lincs (Fig. 59), and those of Leake (Fig. 60), or Willingham, Cambs. (Plate XA).

Thirteenth century screens are not numerous, for not only has time caused their disappearance through natural decay, but they have too frequently been sacrificed to make way for the more elaborate works of the succeeding centuries.

The fourteenth century provides us with a fair number of roodscreens, of more elaborate pattern than their predecessors, as might be expected. Some of them are very beautiful, and new variations in form are tried. That of Lavenham Church, Suffolk (Plate IX) is an excellent example.

The arcaded form is frequently found, although until the invention of groined covings, or vaultings, the general structure was rectangular—necessarily so in the case of those screens which supported a loft or gallery.

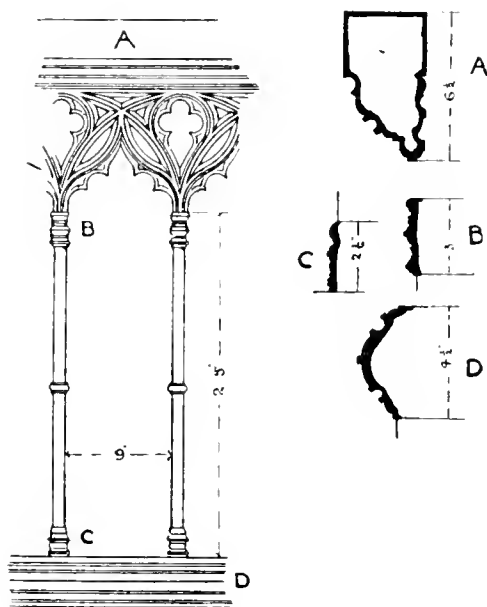


FIG. 60

In the larger screens the number of lights is greatly multiplied, but in the smaller churches, in a very large majority of instances, it is to be noticed that the triple division is maintained.

The roodscreens in the fourteenth century were, probably for the first time, constructed to support roodlofts, and thus they often were kept low, and of a depressed form—the arcaded form of the lights being less marked; as an example of this type we give a sketch of the screen heads at Merton, Norfolk (Fig. 61). This instance will serve to show how beautifully the screen builders of this epoch reconciled the presence of the traditional “cancelli” with the clear openings demanded by liturgical custom—the upper part of the screen being filled with exquisite tracery, whilst the lower is comparatively free from obstruction.

The arched headed form of lights are found very strongly marked in work of the later fourteenth century, of which screens such as those at Curry Rivel (Fig. 88, *Somerset Section*), or Warfield, Berks, afford instances.

And from this time onwards the tendency to insist upon the arcaded form increases, until at last, when the full glory of wooden screenwork supervenes in the middle of the fifteenth century, the great majority of roodscreens exhibit this form. Not only are the lights or windows of the screens thus shaped, but the rich and cunningly-wrought vaultings which they carry, for the support of the lofts, are beautifully adapted to this arched form, and it becomes at last the most essential and characteristic ornament of the screens, a diminutive copy of the glorious roofs of stone-ribbed vaulting, with its liernes or fans, which are the pride of many a noble minster.

§ 24. In spite of the terrible havoc wrought in our churches by the malice of Puritans, and the far worse mischief done by the well-meaning, but terribly ruthless “restorers” of the last century, we have a surprising number and variety of examples remaining of fifteenth and sixteenth century screens. It is impossible here to attempt anything like an exhaustive description of the types, but a few of the leading varieties must be mentioned. In the three county sections (Devon, Somerset, and Cornwall) alone is a definite classification attempted. For the rest it must suffice to indicate those broader differences of character which give individuality to the works of the several counties.

A very large number of fifteenth century screens were designed, like those of the preceding century, to support a plain horizontal coving or hollow projecting ceiling, and we find this type very widely distributed. It is characteristic of the South and West Midlands, Wales, Gloucester, North Somerset, Wilts, Oxfordshire, and other counties. The class embraces an enormous number of varieties, but the illustration given—that of the screen at Ashchurch, near Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, is typical (Plate LXIIA).

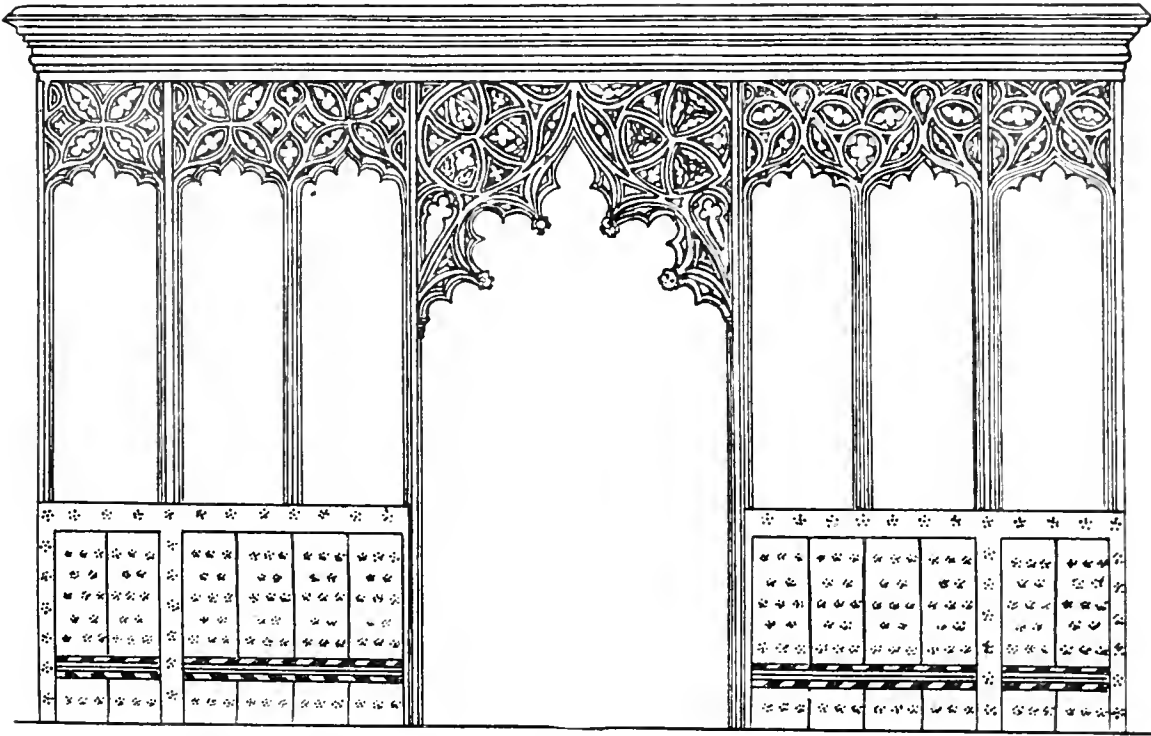


FIG. 61

Illustrations are given in other sections of this work showing further varieties of screenwork of this class. To these the vaulted screens, which are so plentiful in the West of England, offer a great contrast. The West Country type of screens is quite distinguished from any other, not only in the character of the detail, but also, and chiefly, in the general construction of its parts. These usually consist of a series of rich fenestrations of open compartments divided by moulded and carved standards about 3 feet apart framed with a sill at the floor level, and a transom rail about 3 feet 6 inches above, the space between sill and transom being filled with three or four vertical panels having traceried heads, and often filled on the plain surfaces below with painted figures. The arcaded openings above the dado-rail are each again divided into three or four compartments by light shafts, and the arched heads filled with tracery usually of the regular Perpendicular type. Above the open tracery, and projecting from the spandrils of the arches, is a rich vaulting of polygonal section, the ribs moulded,

and the panels enriched with sunk tracery or carvings in low relief. A very perfect instance of this may be seen at Marwood (Barnstaple), of which we give a photograph showing the west side (Plate XVA).

Although Devonshire is the county richest in vaulted screens, the parts of Somerset adjoining can also boast of a large number. The type of detail varies in different localities (*vide* Somerset section). There is a type of singular beauty and refinement in South Somerset, exemplified in the screen at High Ham (Plate LII), than which it would be perhaps impossible to find any work of more exquisite refinement and graceful design in the whole West Country. Another group of beautiful screens occurs in the Dunster district.

Cornwall appears to have possessed at one time an abundance of vaulted screens, but vandalism has been so horribly rampant in that county that practically only two or three remain. St. Ewe has one of the best. The work is rough, not approaching that of the Devon screens in quality. As we enter the southern and midland districts we find a marked decrease in the number of the vaulted screens. One reason would appear to be that the churches of the more central and southern counties were not so systematically rebuilt in the fifteenth century as were those of Somerset and Devon, and thus the older arrangements for the most part were perpetuated. But as we approach the Eastern Counties we again enter into a promising field.

At Edlesborough, Bucks (Plate XI A), and Redbourn, Herts, are fine vaulted screens, each presenting a marked peculiarity of type and of considerable merit. At Redbourn the vaulting is perforated, giving a very light effect, suggestive of filigree-work.<sup>1</sup>

Further east we find large numbers of screens in Norfolk and Suffolk bearing evidences of having once possessed a vaulted canopy for the support of a loft.

Screens of the Norfolk pattern are of entirely different character to those of Devon, and as these represent the two leading types of English screenwork, a brief comparison may not be out of place. The lights are taller and narrower than those of Devon, and are far more open, there being in the majority of instances no tracery mullions; but the arcades are garnished with a double-feathered cusping, of minute and delicate character; while the heads of the openings are filled with a crocketed ogee canopy starting from a little below the springing of the arch.

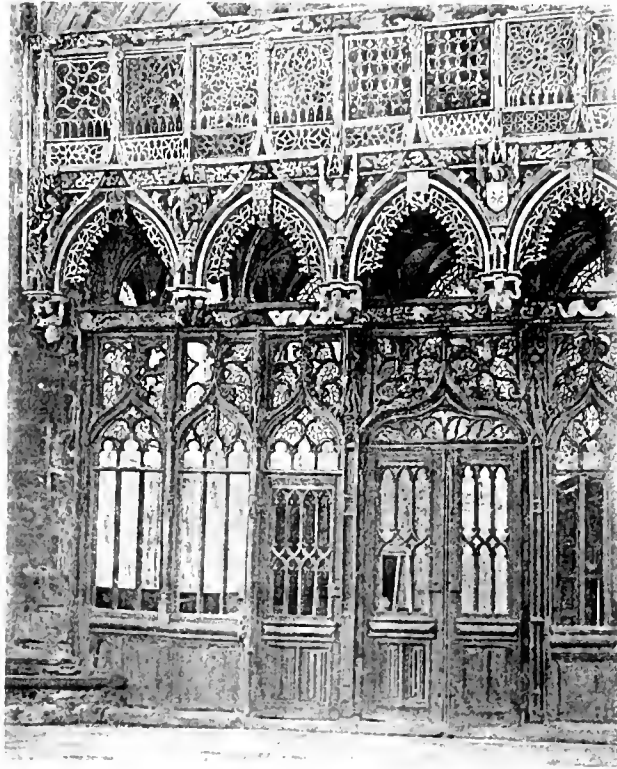
We may instance Trunch and Cawston (Fig. 62A and B) as leading examples. They probably had vaulted canopies of an exceedingly fine order, springing from small fans, which expanded into a continuous rising soffit, beautifully ornamented with ribs, liernes, carved bosses, and tracery fillings. At Mobberley, Cheshire (Plate XI B), and Campsall, Yorks, are screens of this type, and in these again we have the arcaded lights pure and simple, quite clear of tracery, bringing us once more face to face with the older forms. At St. Nicholas, Brighton, is another fine instance of this class of vaulting, and here the lights contain the floriated ogee canopies and other enrichments of the characteristic Norfolk type.

<sup>1</sup> A peculiarity seen also in the screens of Halberton and Totnes, Devon.

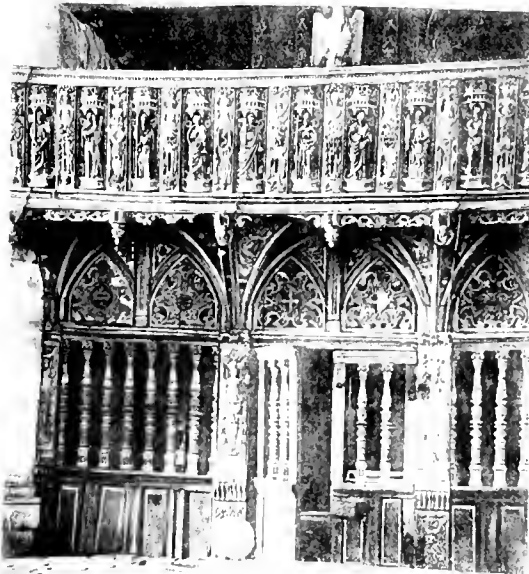


# PLATE XX

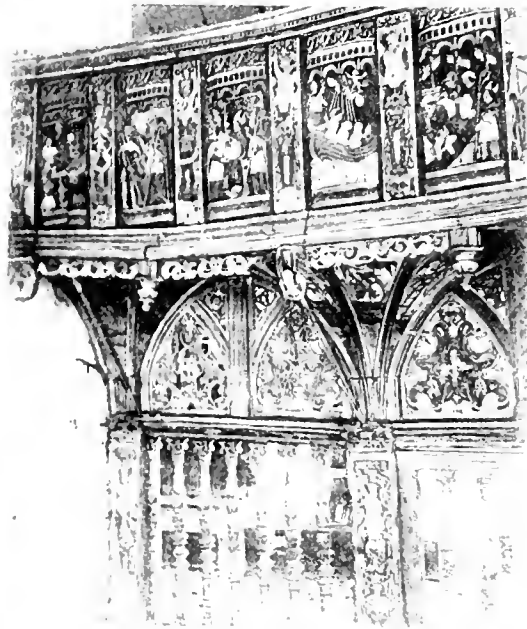
## THE ROODLOFT AND ICONOSTASIS IN THE WEST



(A) ROODSCREEN AND LOFT: SAINT FIACRE, BRITTANY



EAST FACE



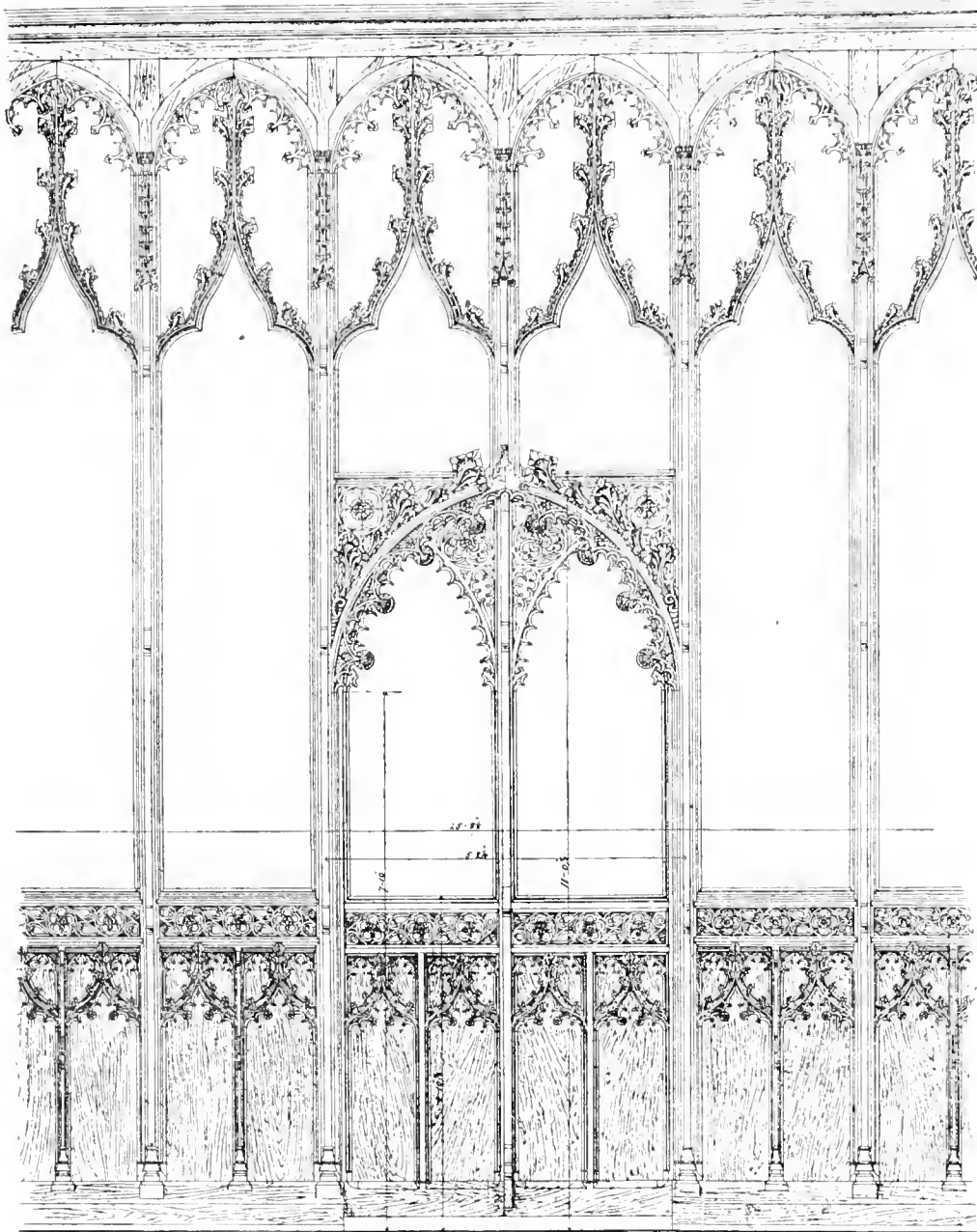
WEST FACE

(The panels illustrate nine scenes in the life of S. Nicholas)

(B) ROODSCREEN AND ICONOSTASIS (XVI CENTURY) AT CHAPEL OF ST. NICHOLAS, PRIZIAC, MORBIHAN, BRITTANY



ROOD SCREEN  
S: AGNES' CHURCH · CAWSTON · NORFOLK



ELEVATION

*Scale of Feet.*



FIG. 62A

East Anglia also offers us other varieties. Some of the screens there are elaborately traceried, as at Barton, Cambs, or Castle Hedingham, Essex (Plate Xc and d), and a few would have assumed a very different form, such as the screen to the south aisle at East Harling, which is more like the Devonshire order in its proportions, and in the character of the vaulting.

The difference in the character of the mouldings and other small detail must be noted, those of East Anglia being much more imitative of stonework features in attenuated form than those of the West; but they have a feature in common in the painted figures of saints, prophets, sibyls, etc., which adorn their lower panels. Yet there is the greatest possible divergence in respect of the quality of the paintings in the two districts; for whereas those of Norfolk are refined works of art, frequently of a masterly character, their effect heightened with gold and with the relief of embossed designs, those of Devon are mostly of rude and conventional design, coarse in execution, yet picturesque in their ugliness, and very valuable in their antiquarian merits and their symbolic interest.<sup>1</sup> The fact that in these later screens the series of painted panels ran the whole length of the screens is conclusive evidence that the nave altars were not attached, as in the earlier screens, to their western side. Where altars existed in the nave they must have been independent of the screens, unless the very elaborate pier-casing which, in some instances, broke the continuity of the screens with its rich niches and canopy-work may have served as the reredos for an altar. At North Molton, at the extreme southern extremity of the roodscreen, is a semi-hexagonal projection to the westward, which would appear to have been the support of an image connected with some shrine. At Bradninch (Plate LXXXIB, Devon section), statuettes still remain on the pier casings.

§ 25. Coming to differences in detail, we can scarcely venture to classify these, but must refer our readers to the County sections, where a number of such differences are exhaustively considered in regard to individual screens.<sup>2</sup> But there are certain points that need to be brought out clearly—broad distinctions of detail which we find in certain districts, and these we will now endeavour to explain.

The districts pre-eminent for the possession of an abundance of choice wooden screenwork are :

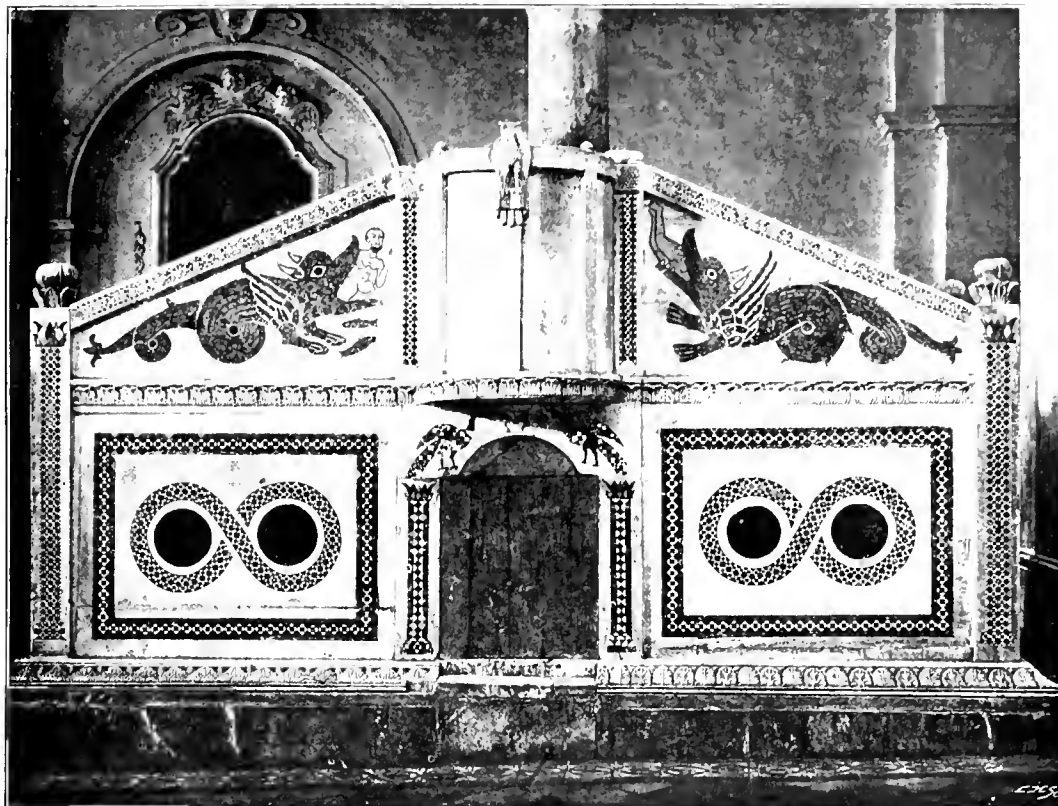
- (1) East Anglia, including Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Lincolnshire, and Cambridge.
- (2) The south-west, including Somerset and Devon.<sup>3</sup> (Cornwall has lost its once high place in the list.)
- (3) The Welsh Border, including parts of Denbigh, Montgomery, Radnor, and Brecknock, with the parts of Shropshire, Hereford, and Monmouth adjoining.

In these districts the very large majority of screens remaining are in oak, and

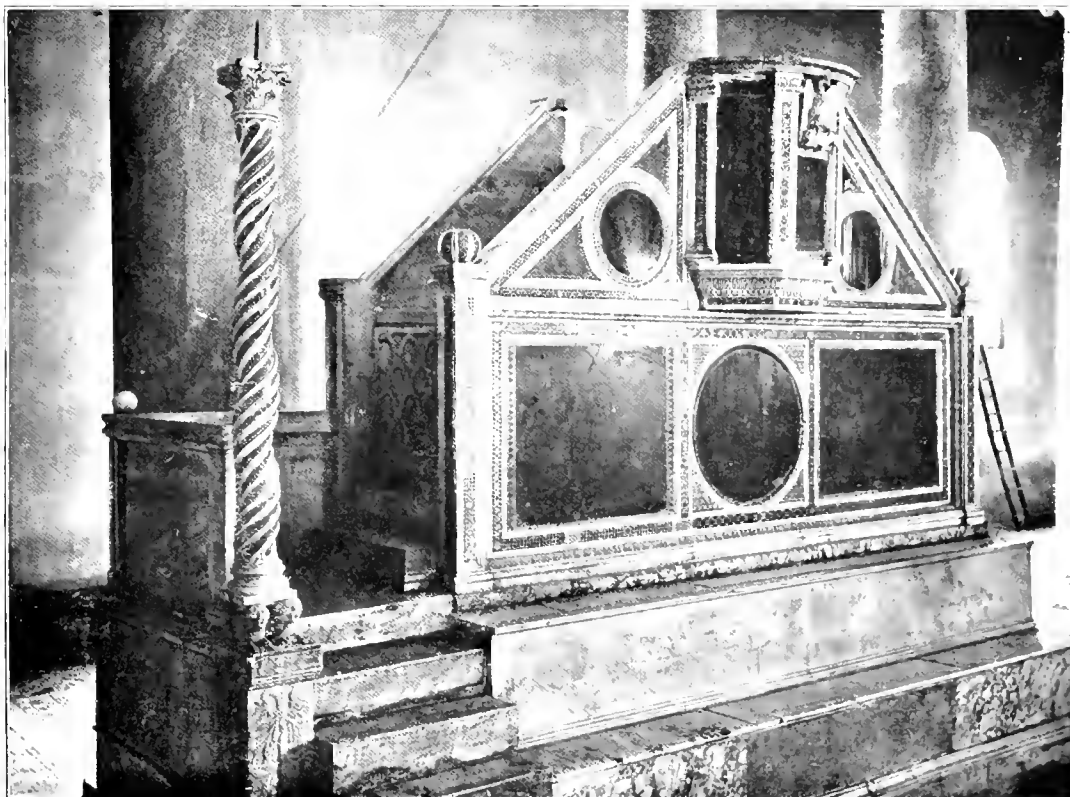
<sup>1</sup> *I*vide Illustrations in Part III.      <sup>2</sup> See Plates XII to XVII at end of this section (p. 70)

<sup>3</sup> In the Oolite freestone districts, including portions of the counties of Wilts, Somerset, Gloucester, and Oxford, we find numerous stone screens, those of North Wilts being especially fine; and in the Bere freestone district of S. Devon are evidences of another large group once existing, though now much reduced in numbers.

PLATE XXI  
EARLY ITALIAN AMBONES



(A) AMBO IN CATHEDRAL, RAVELLO



(B) AMBO IN SAN LORENZO, ROME



Church of St. Agnes, Causton, Norfolk.  
*Details of Rood Screen.*

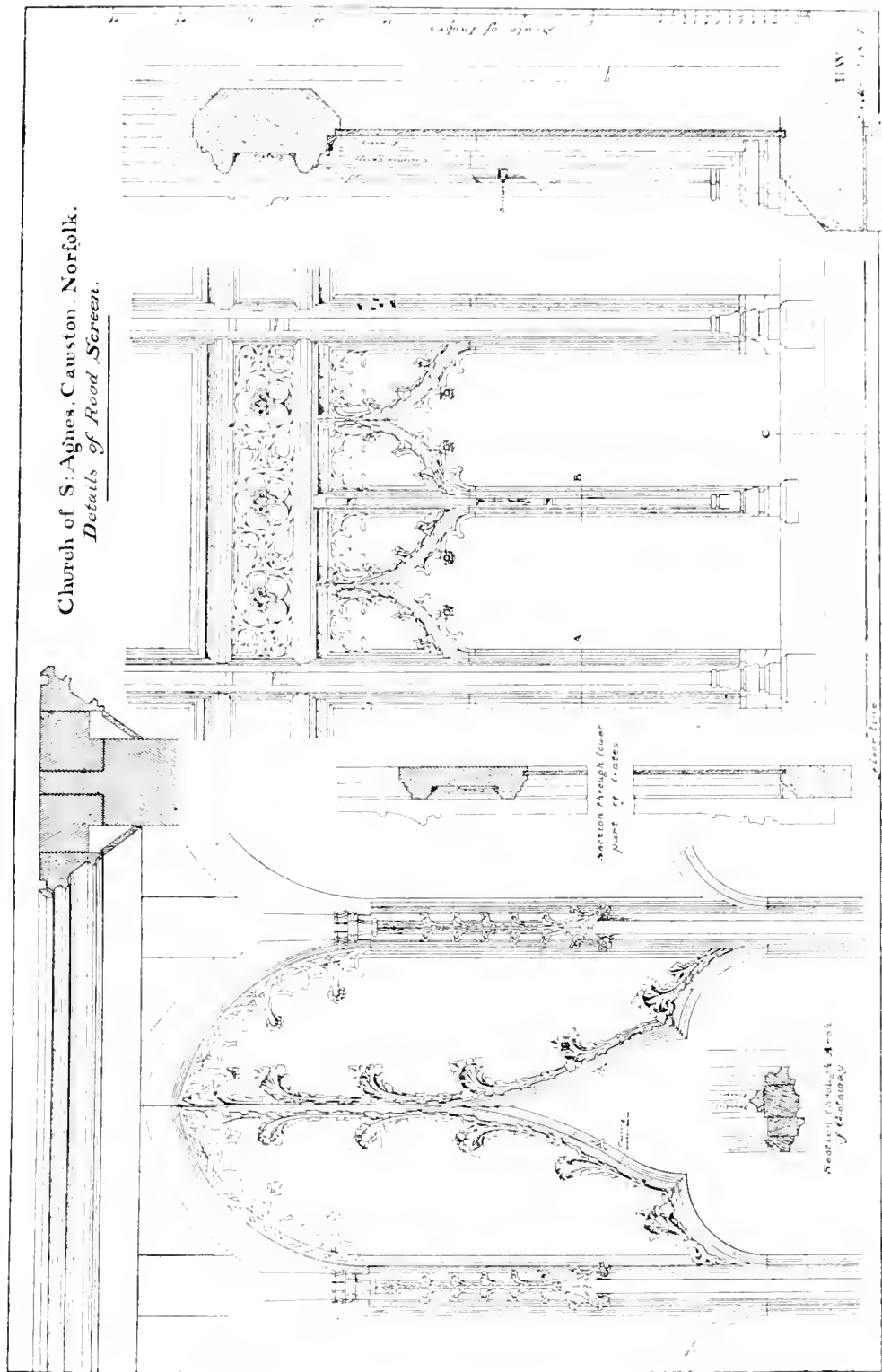


FIG. 62B

we very seldom find stone screenwork, save in certain parts of Somerset and Devon, and in one or two other limited areas, where there happened to be a suitable free-working stone in which choice masonry and carver's work was practicable. It is worthy of note that the districts most rich in wooden screens to-day are precisely those in which the native stone is refractory or coarse, as in Devon and Wales, or where stone is either non-existent or extremely scarce, as in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Carvers were obliged to turn to wood in these localities, as the only material suited to fine carving or moulding, and thus they learned to make the most of the good qualities of the oak which in those days grew so freely in England.

But until the thirteenth century the arts of wood-working and wood-carving were so little advanced that wherever the nature of the local stone rendered it possible, there would stonework of a greater or less degree of elaboration be found, and it is from this cause that we trace those peculiar differences in the woodwork which supplants it. So conservative and so much the slave of habit and association is the average designer that he is insensibly tied by the mental images which are habitual to him, and thus it is that we find those forms which are proper to stone construction are transferred to wood, when the change in material is instituted.

It is peculiarly interesting, therefore, to trace the influence of the stone screenwork on the evolution of woodwork from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century. At first the design was obviously borrowed from the stonemason's art and all the earlier screens exhibit to a greater or less extent in their detail the character of stone mouldings, and the heavy proportions of stonework. But in the fifteenth century, if not earlier yet in some districts, the nature and capability of wood as a material became so thoroughly understood that we see a special type of design elaborated, which has little or nothing in common with the design of stone ornament, and the proportions are of a lightness agreeable to the strength of the oak, and the tenacity of its fibre.

Although the clumsiness of stone proportion gave way to a lightness more appropriate to the material, designers were loth to give up those features whose character was borrowed from stonework—namely, parapets, buttresses, weather tables and drip-moulds, pinnacles and battlements—and in some districts the ornamental parts of the design are chiefly composed of these objects dwarfed to Lilliputian proportions. This seems a good deal the case with the wood screens of the second or middle period—and much of the East Anglian work dates from that time. But in the West Country, where we have an abundance of late screens—some being immediately pre-Reformation—there is little or no borrowed or imitative detail of this sort; the features are bold and honest, well adapted to the material. Beads preponderate over hollows in the mouldings, and the enrichments all suggest wood or woody fibre and vegetative growths. There is an absence of hard square edges, which, like hollows, never look natural in wood.

In this connection it seems important to recall the fact that it is in the very districts wherein we find this more natural and real way of treating woodwork that the Church had had a continuous history from Celtic times, so that older schools of woodcraft might



have been perpetuated, and the ideas and traditions of Celtic art would have lingered in the imagination of West-Country men, who are largely of Celtic blood.

The British methods of church-building were all based on wood rather than stone construction, and in the treatment of wood they excelled. The traditional character of their ornament may be exemplified by two instances from the screens lately at Moretonhampstead, Devon, and at Newtown, Montgomery (Figs. 63A and B), in which the idea of twisted tendril-work is very strongly brought out. There is a striking similarity between some of this detail and the interlaced tendril patterns which we find incised upon early stonework, and which seems to imply a web of plaited wickerwork as its originating character—such as we may reasonably suppose to have formed the basis of the lighter screen or partition work constructed by our Celtic ancestors, whose ornament was of the filigree type.<sup>1</sup>

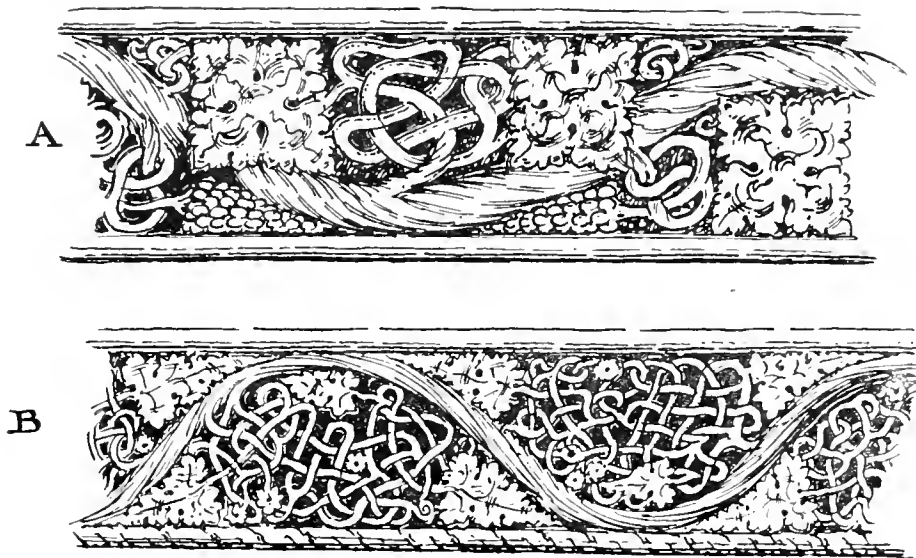


FIG. 63

But those who designed and executed the earlier wooden screens betray a want of knowledge of the material and of a sufficient familiarity with its capabilities. Their work is simply an imitation of stone, with often the same proportions given to mouldings that would be suitable in the latter material, and the work appears consequently lacking in refinement.

At Clapton-in-Gordano, the old thirteenth century screen is undercut in a way truly marvellous, but suggestive of fearful labour for the unfortunate executant. With the development of the joiner's art in the fourteenth century, however, the splendid qualities

<sup>1</sup> Sir James Hall entertained the theory that all Gothic art was only a kind of fossilised basketwork, and he traced the origin of crockets and foliated pinnacles to the sprouting buds of wickerwork twined for ornament's sake upon long round poles. A valuable essay bearing on the "skeuomorphic" origin of architectural detail, by Dr. Colley March, will be found in the "Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society" for 1889 (Vol. VII).

of oak as a subject for fine and delicate carving became realised, and in such instances as those of the parclose screens at King's Lynn (Plate Xb) we see the full realisation of the dexterity and genius of the mediæval woodcarver.

Side by side with the development of wooden screenwork, stone screens took on a more open and graceful character, but at last began to exhibit a fatal defect (the converse of the early defect of the wooden screens), namely, an attempt to imitate the lightness of timber. But the penalty of this must soon have been painfully evident in the fragility of the tabernacle work so treated, and in the final resort oak held the field. Thus in the fifteenth century the wood screens are found to vastly preponderate over the stone ones.<sup>1</sup>

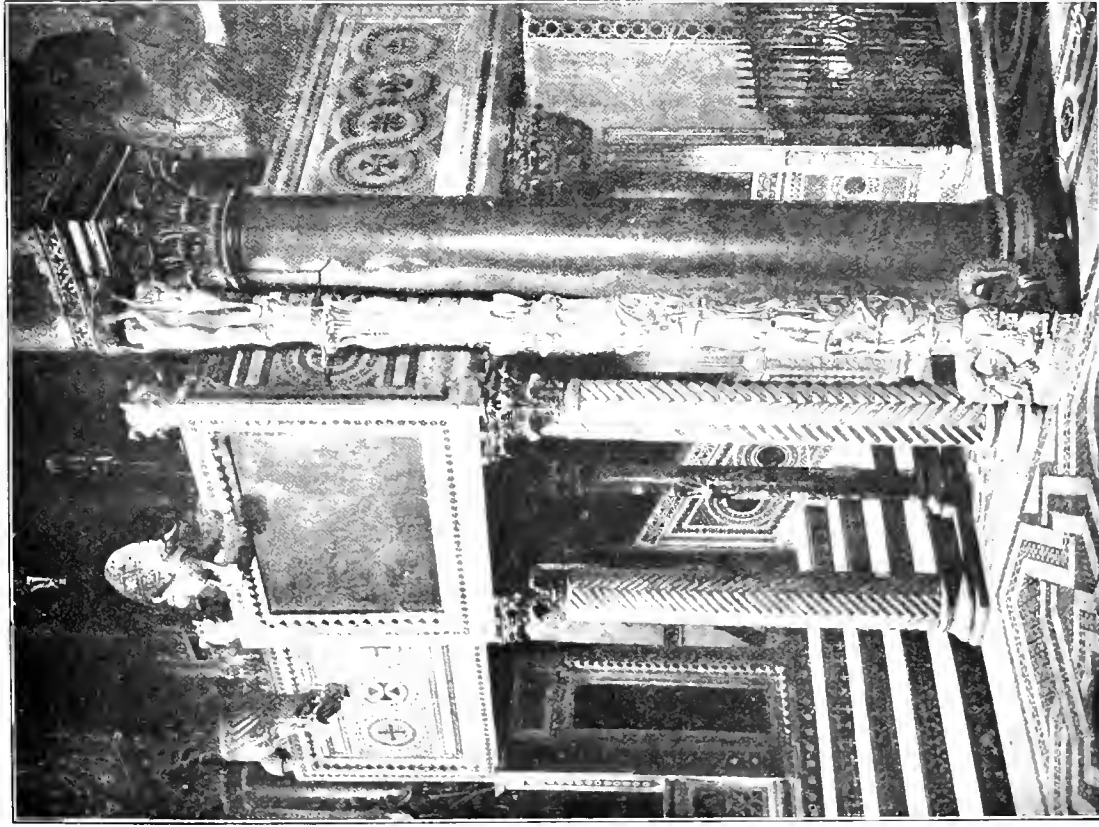
§ 26. We find that, as we approach the period of Henry VIII's reign, a change takes place, and one not for the better, in the carved woodwork of our churches. It becomes more careless, more hasty, and begins to exhibit a certain shallowness of effect—with a mechanical use of tools. At the same time patterns multiply, and foreign ideas are more and more brought into requisition. Thus we find Italian, French, and Flemish detail introduced into English screenwork. The effect of this is undoubtedly an increase of interest at first sight—but the impression is too often superficial—the attractiveness is ephemeral unless the work possess vigour and truthfulness of expression—and this is too often lacking.

By the time of Edward VI the decline reached its crisis. Hasty attempts to replace ruined works in the time of Queen Mary betray their careless and imperfect nature, and by the reign of Elizabeth ecclesiastical art in England was practically dead, yet the craft lingered in domestic works. Under the first two Stuart kings we witness a fitful revival, and then with the Commonwealth comes the last catastrophe, and all art is submerged beneath the wave of militant Puritanism which regards the love of beauty as a sin.

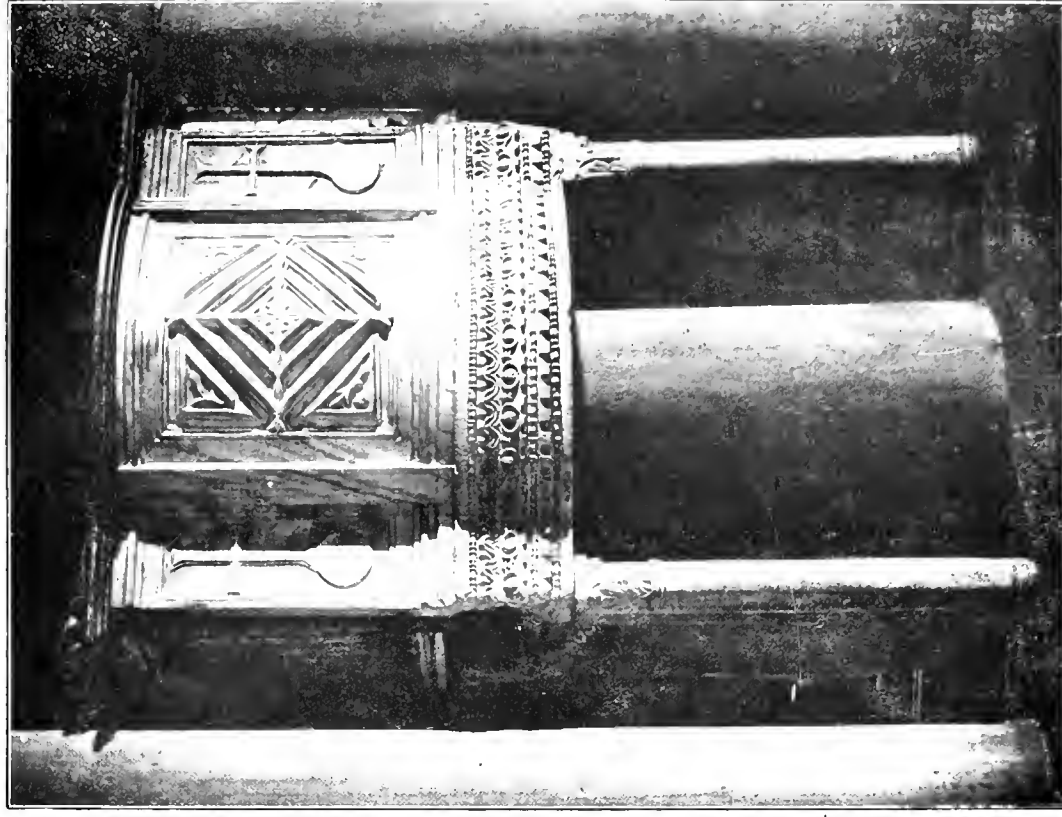
The art of wood-carving in this country came to perfection in the fifteenth century, by which time the experience of generations of native craftsmen had resulted in the attainment of a mastery of design and executive ability unsurpassed in any other time.

Our forefathers under the first Tudors were indeed artists to the backbone. They could think and feel, as it were, in the material they were working. Their best products are instinct with vitality, and we who are now struggling out of the abyss of vulgarity which the discovery of mechanical methods of production, imitative processes, and the commercial taint of the past century have bequeathed to us, are but now beginning to realise how masterly and how perfect as works of art most of these fifteenth century wood-carvings are. Strange how the blight of barren ugliness should have so fallen upon a nation as completely to efface in a few generations the instinct and power of beautiful production! Yet ere the shadow of a sad Puritanism fell, and a sterile coldness usurped the place of the once resplendent glories of our churches, the seeds of decay were sown and were fast coming to fruition.

<sup>1</sup> We have an example of a choir screen of oak in the Augustinian Priory Church of Hexham.



(A) AMBO, CAPPPELLA PALATINA, PALERMO



(B) AMBO, S. APOLLINARE NUOVO, RAVENNA



## SECTION III

### THE ICONOSTASIS AND THE ROODLOFT

#### THE ICONOSTASIS OF THE EASTERN CHURCH

§ 27. **T**HE iconostasis, or solid screen of the sanctuary, developed from its simpler prototypes in the primitive churches of the third and fourth centuries, was already known in Egypt, Libya, Greece, and Asia Minor before 420 A.D., and in Spain before 384 A.D., whilst De Fleury gives us the instance of St. Januarius, Naples, for which an earlier date is claimed. Naples, though in Italy, was a Greek city.

The mural form, such as we hear of in the Church at Patmos (grotto of the Apocalypse), or in the rock-cut churches of Taurida, where only small openings existed,<sup>1</sup> is that most closely identified with the Eastern liturgies.

In Italy it took, as we have seen, a more open form, such as St. Mark's, Venice, which still offers us a good example, and it was there common until the eighth century, when it began to be displaced, the latest examples being of the thirteenth century, and these very rare.<sup>2</sup>

The feature, in its Eastern form, was carried by Nestorian Christians as far East as Ispahan and Malabar. Used alternately with veils by the Armenian Church, we can, nevertheless, trace a continuous employment of the solid iconostasis in other churches of the Orient. At first built of stone, they gradually incorporated choicer and more expensive materials. An early specimen mentioned by De Fleury is that of the Convent of St. Catherine, Mount Sinai, which was inlaid with ivory, silver, and mother-of-pearl or tortoise-shell. Examples of the sixth century are found at Chio-Mghwimé, and at Martquoph, in the convent church. The former shows sculptures—on the one side St. Simeon Stylites and his mother—and, further on, Evagrius searching for St. Chio (a passage in the life of the hermit), and upon the other side the Crucifixion is represented.

The iconostasis at Martquoph exhibits painted figures of the Twelve Holy Doctors and their names in Russian.

When the Christian Empire of the East reached the height of its glory, the churches appear to have been of an almost incredible richness. The Oratory of Basil the Macedonian, erected 867 A.D., is described by Constantine Porphyrogenetus as having a magnificent iconostasis—a marvel of richness. Columns and plinth wall were all plated with silver, the architrave with pure gold, and decorated with all the wealth that Ind could furnish. Our Lord's name and image were inlaid thereon in many places, with enamel. The interior of the chapel was almost all silver-plated.

<sup>1</sup> Stroukow, "Ancient Monuments of Taurida," &c. (Moscow, 1876.)

<sup>2</sup> St. Alexis on the Aventine (Rome) is one.

In Georgia, King Miriam built a chapel with an iconostasis of many arches, the cable pattern being the chief ornament. In the Church of Ghelati, near Koutäis, is a stone iconostasis resplendent with saints' images covered with gold and jewels—brought thither in ancient times by the patriarchs of Abkhazie. The iconostasis of Sion, Aténi, Georgia (Fig. 32), is another instance of the arcaded type, which so strongly influenced our Western builders.

Beginning with stone and other similar material, and showing frequently the arcaded form, the iconostasis later tends to change its character. It becomes on the one hand a more complete enclosure, the wall surface greater, the openings smaller, whilst veils and finally doors are employed to make the division absolute—at the same time, stone gives way to wood, and the mediæval and later iconostases are all of this material.

The Church of Makalaken (Mingrelia)<sup>1</sup> has an iconostasis of brick of the ninth century; that of St. Sergius, Old Cairo, together with others in the same city, is of wood, enriched with ivory, pearls, and marquetry. On one of the doors is a Coptic and Arabic inscription in ivory inlaid: "Salute the Temple of the Almighty Father."

There are some curious panels of wood with bas-reliefs of the Nativity, the Lord's Supper, and three saints on horseback, including SS. Mark and George, probably fragments of an older iconostasis of the eighth or ninth century.<sup>2</sup>

M. de Rossi considers that about the ninth century the Orientals covered their screens with pictures as a protest against iconoclastic heresy. Paintings are greatly multiplied upon the later ones, which become a regular picture gallery in some cases.

The Mosaic representations of tenth century iconostases at Bethlehem have been already alluded to. Several interesting iconostases remain of the thirteenth century. One at Mount Kasbek, illustrated by De Fleury,<sup>3</sup> bears an image of Our Lord upon a gable-headed tablet with pointed pinnacle over, and a lesser tablet with a picture of the Blessed Virgin at its base just over the gable. By the side of this opens the sanctuary entrance—a large arch with rope-pattern mouldings, and beyond it, on the further side, are two smaller arches, containing low cancelli.

At Smyrna, the Church of St. Demetrius has an iconostasis with three doors, decorated with columns of precious marble, the central door having before the columns two lions.

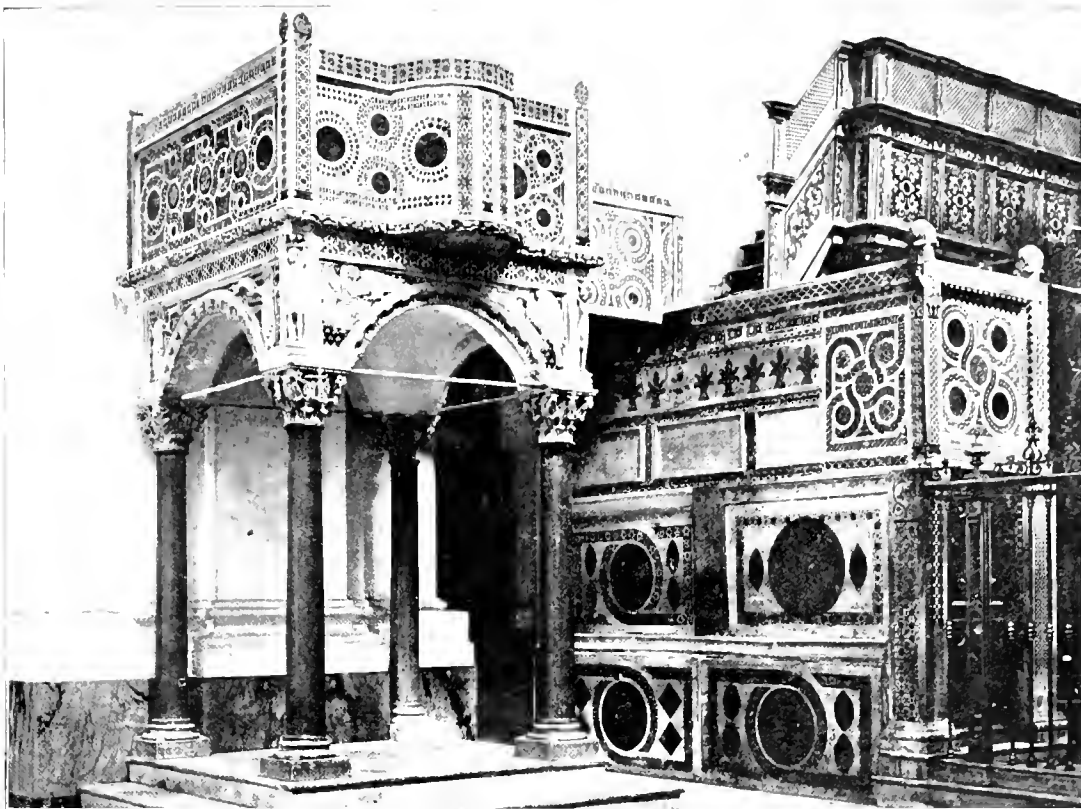
The early chapel of Pnyx, near Athens, has a very simple iconostasis, consisting of two divisions ornamented with painting, and a central doorway.

§ 28. In the fourteenth century the Venetians, having a wealth of Oriental marble and other valuable materials coming into port, wished to increase the splendour of their screen, and they accordingly replaced the low cancelli by a veritable iconostasis. Nothing of the older screen remained but the small Roman arcades of the base. They replaced the twelfth century work by panels of wonderfully rich marble, and erected upon octagonal pedestals, eight columns surmounted by capitals fantastically foliated, and an architrave supporting a silver cross. The position of this iconostasis corresponds to that of St. Sophia.

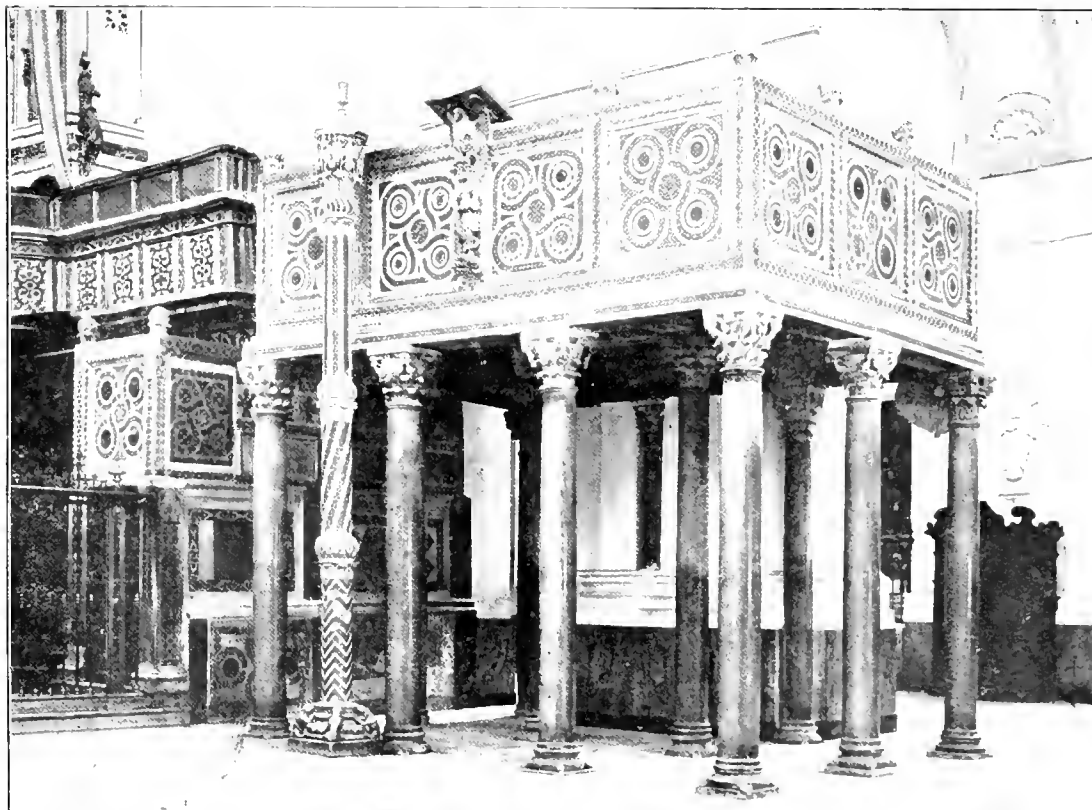
<sup>1</sup> De Fleury, "La Messe," Vol. III, pp. 105, *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Middleton, *The Academy*, 1882, p. 267.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Plate ccxlv.



(A) AMBO ON NORTH SIDE OF SCREEN, SALERNO



(B) AMBO ON SOUTH SIDE OF SCREEN, SALERNO





At the same time that Venice was able to afford sumptuous marble for her iconostases, the Orientals, by this time very poor, were constrained to build in wood, the poverty of the material being masked by facile paintings.

M. Albert Lenoir (quoted by De Fleury) says of many Levantine sanctuaries whose screens he has seen, that these screens are formed of a light frame of wood, of slight elevation, and pierced with one or three doors, the surface divided into equal compartments by little pilasters. In the richer churches, silver-plated covers to the pictures are added. Generally the upper part, *a sort of attic storey*, consists of an unbroken row of small tables representing the Twelve Apostles (the ancient traditional ornament of the iconostasis); also the principal scenes in Our Lord's life. A wood carving, gilt, of palm leaves and foliage occupies the centre, where there is a gilt cross. A flabellum, often ornamented with angels' heads, is fixed upon the screen. Lamps burn before these tables, and ostrich eggs are often hung over them, as in the mosques.

Among the best are those of St. Theodore at Pergamon (Plate XVIII A), the Greek Church of Livornia, and the Cathedral of Smyrna. A more modern instance is given in the accompanying illustration of the Metropolitan Church of Magnesia, Asia Minor (Plate XVIII B).

§ 29. The Greek churches present a species of screen lightly constructed and mounting nearly to the roof of the church, entirely masking the sanctuary for its whole height.

The most beautiful example (says De Fleury) is that of St. Spiridion at Corfu, the lower part of which is decorated with tablets painted on a gold ground, and ornaments of beaten silver—the part next above forms one great painting representing legions of angels forming a celestial choir around a Crucifix in relief. Of the “attic storey” the first, or top tier contains twelve panels divided by pilasters; on each panel the portrait of one of the Apostles, on a gold ground; an equal number of subjects relating to the Gospel occupies the row next beneath; whilst in the lower part of the screen are three doors closed by painted panels.

An iconostasis of the fifteenth century at Samari, in the Morea, consists of five arches covered with paintings, and a series of small arched panels in the attic. That of St. Demetrius, Mount Ossa (Thessaly), is also of five arches, the central one opening on the sanctuary, the rest closed and ornamented with pictures, whilst above are a row of small arches, with a large cross and statues of St. Mary and St. John overhead.

A. J. Butler, in his “Ancient Coptic Churches of Egypt,” gives the following description of the screen of Abu-s-Seyfeyn, which will illustrate the type there found.

“It is a massive partition of ebony, divided into three large panels—doorway and two side panels—which are framed in masonry. At each side of the doorway is a square pillar, plastered and painted: on the left is portrayed the Crucifixion, and over it the sun shining full; on the right, the taking down from the Cross, and over it the sun eclipsed. In the centre a double door, opening choirwards, is covered with elaborate mouldings enclosing ivory crosses carved in high relief. All round the framing of the doors, tablets

of solid ivory, chased with arabesques, are inset, and the topmost part of each panel is marked off for an even richer display of chased tablets and crosses.

“ Each of the side panels of the screen is one mass of superbly-cut crosses of ivory, inlaid in even lines, so as to form a kind of broken trellis-work on the ebony background. The spaces between the crosses are filled with little squares, pentagons, hexagons, and other figures of ivory, variously designed, and figured with exquisite skill.

“ The screen is carried upwards, flush with the masonry setting of the large panels, by some beautiful woodwork which serves as a mounting for a great number of pictures. First comes a band of golden texts, with large letters carved in relief—on the dexter side, Coptic, and on the other, Arabic, writing : then a row of small pictures, set in a continuous framing or arcading of woodwork ; above this a second band of golden texts in Coptic and Arabic ; then twelve small painted beams, projecting about a cubit, and fitted each with an iron ring long disused, but meant to hold a pendent lamp. Above the beams a third band of gold letters—all Arabic ; and lastly a row of eleven separate large pictures.”

The Coptic churches usually consist of a nave and side aisles, without transepts—a modified Basilican plan, with narthex at west.

They are divided transversely by three screens,<sup>1</sup> the rearmost section being occupied by the women. Next, divided by a latticed screen, comes the men's section, larger and more richly decorated, and this is partitioned from the choir by another screen, the altars, three in number, in their separate apses, being hidden again from the choir by the gorgeous sanctuary screen.

During the celebration the central folding doors are thrown back, and the silver-embroidered curtain is withdrawn, so that the congregation may see the High Altar.<sup>2</sup>

The central door in the iconostasis of St. Sergius, Cairo, is covered by a silk curtain embroidered with crosses. Every Copt, on entering the church, genuflects and kisses this veil. It is here that the priest says the “ Prayer of the Veil.”

The curious points of similarity subsisting between some of the Levantine iconostases which have been described, and our own roodlofts, cannot fail to have struck the reader. The lower and upper tiers of paintings, corresponding to those which we find on the lower panels, and again on the roodloft panels of our own screens in Devonshire, or in Norfolk. Then, again, the general arrangement ; the provision of an “ attic storey ” above the main arches or panels of the screen—like our own roodloft balconies in appearance, the traditional “ Twelve Apostles ” figured there, exactly as we have them described in our own churches of the Middle Ages—as at Long Melford, for instance—further, the lavish use of gold and colour, the choice of wood as the constructive medium—the crowning of the structure with the Crucifix, and figures of SS. Mary and John—all present an extraordinary parallel.

<sup>1</sup> The code of Theodosius ordains a triple division—the rear for probationers, the middle for choir, the front for accepted penitents. We find the reflection of this also apparently in the triple screenwork of the Cistercian churches. Both Cistercians and Benedictines also used the Lenten veil, and the Gilbertines interposed a veil between men and women [Martène : IV].

<sup>2</sup> S. Lane-Poole, in *Art Journal*, 1885.

The close relationship of East and West in this respect cannot be better brought out than by comparing the illustration of the iconostases at Pergamon with that of one of the richer roodlofts of our own country, or of Brittany (see Plates XIX and XX). Save for the more complete enclosure of the middle portion of the height, and the inevitable contrast of minor detail, there is no essential difference.

Asia Minor and Greece followed the plan of Santa Sophia, in using the iconostasis—thus modelling their churches upon the “ Temple of the new Solomon ”—Justinian. The use of the iconostasis has never been discontinued, and in this custom, East and West, the two extremes of Christendom are united, although the position and function of the feature is different. That enclosure (says De Fleury) which St. Gregory of Nazianzus considered symbolic of the separation of earth and heaven, has thus continued as a representative feature of worship in the two remotest bounds of Christendom.



## THE ROODLOFT

### ORIGIN OF THE ROODLOFT.

§ 30. Having now followed the history of English roodscreens from their inception to the period of their full development, it becomes necessary to look back to early times, in order to trace the evolution of the roodloft, a feature so intimately associated with the screen in our churches that the two cannot be disconnected.

The roodloft was a gallery surmounting the chancel-screen, and having on its western or nave side a balcony front of ornamental panelling or niche-work, often highly enriched with sculpture and painting, with another, usually of plainer character, to the east.

It has been customary to regard the roodloft as having been developed from the two ambones or raised tribunes of pulpit-form, which in the early Basilican churches were placed, first at the sides of the choir enclosure in the nave (as at San Clemente, in Rome), or as we find later and more generally, at the lower end of the choir.

The ambones, of which numerous fine examples still survive in Italy, were really large pulpits, capable of holding a number of persons.<sup>1</sup> Illustrations of early ambones of inlaid marble from San Lorenzo (Plate XXIB), and San Clemente, Rome (Plate III), and from Ravello (Plate XXIA) are given.

They were used for the reading of the Epistle and the Gospel, of the Diptychs or Books of Commemoration, the Acts of Martyrs, letters of Peace or Communion, etc. ; also the Homilies of Bishops and Presbyters, and the regulations of Princes were read from them ; sermons were delivered from the ambo, and it was there that the newly-converted made profession of faith,<sup>2</sup> and, finally, they were employed for the canonical singers who alone,

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* illustrations given by De Fleury in his work “ La Messe.”

<sup>2</sup> Walcott’s “ Sacred Archaeology.”

of all singers, were authorised to ascend into them (Canon of Council of Laodicea). A large candlestick by the north ambo supported the Paschal Candle, and there were iron prickets for tapers. The most ancient ambo now surviving was considered to be that

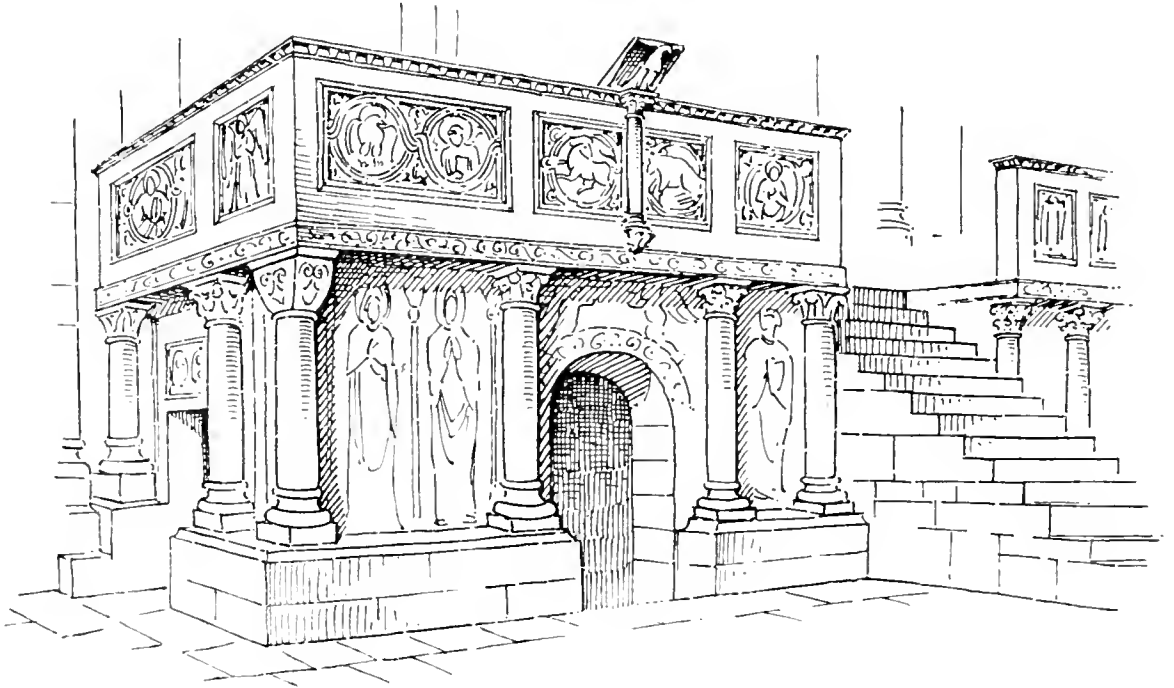


FIG. 64

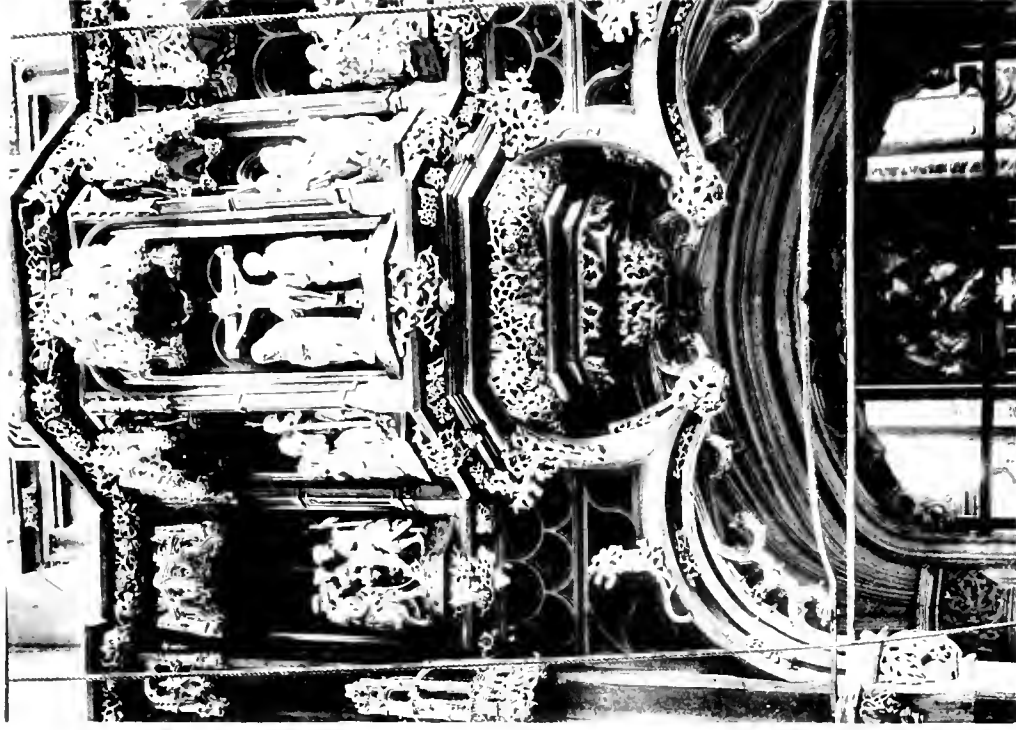
of the Church of the Holy Ghost at Ravenna, and is of the sixth century. We have in that of St. Apollinare Nuovo, in the same city (Plate XXII) an illustration of another early ambo, and among those in De Fleury's collection may probably be found some earlier yet. The latest example of true ambo-form tribune is that of Saint Pancras at Rome. This is dated 1249.

Sometimes, following the most ancient usage, there was but one ambo, as at St. Sophia, Constantinople. This one was large, jewelled, and hung with lights. It stood conspicuously high, centrally on the west face of the "solea" or raised choir space which here abutted on the great pillared iconostasis (Fig. 14B). The old Basilica of St. Peter had but one ambo.

§ 31. When the tendency became strong to establish a marked separation between clergy and laity in the larger churches, the ambones were united with a screen which enclosed the choir. The screen grew taller and the ambones were raised with it, as in the Church of San Miniato, Florence (Plate XXIV), and that of the Frari, Venice. The



(A) AMBON CHOIR SCREEN: SAN MINIATO, FLORENCE



(B) AMBON OVER CHOIR DOOR: AERSCHOT, BELGIUM



beautiful ambones of the Cathedral of Salerno (Plate XXIII) and that of the Cappella Palatina, Palermo, which, by the kindness of Mr. Francis F. Fox we are able to illustrate (Plate XXIIA), show the extraordinary importance of these tribunes and the honour bestowed upon them.<sup>1</sup>

The screen tended to grow yet taller, and the ambones were raised with it, often being placed upon the screen or projecting from it to the westwards, and ultimately they were united in one broad gallery running across the screen from north to south, beneath which would appear, in the centre, the entrance to the ritual choir.

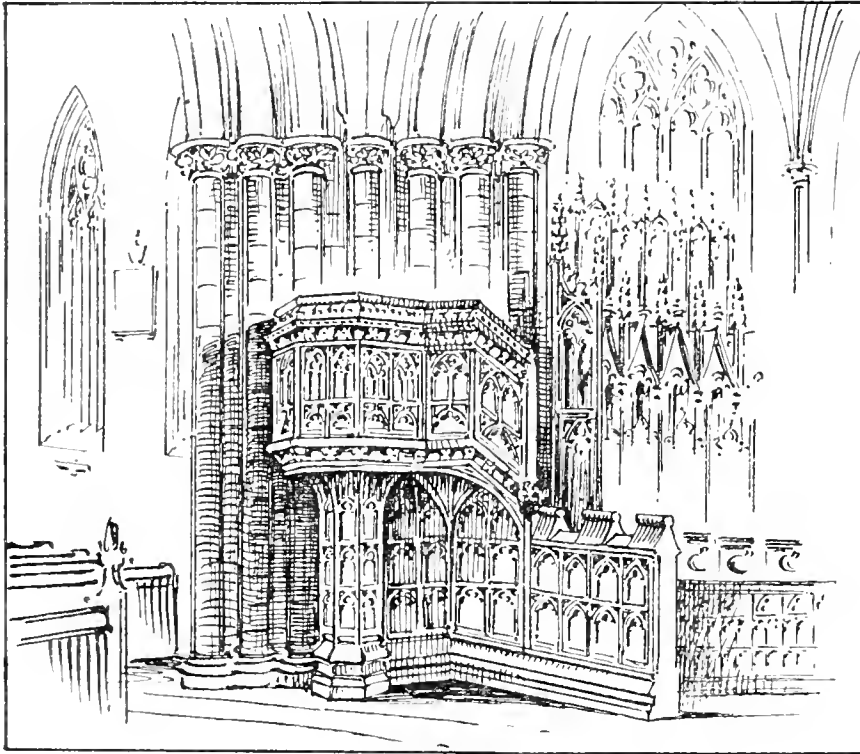


FIG. 65

Thiers mentions an instance, that of Sens Cathedral, in which there was a central archway bearing the rood, flanked by elevated ambones, and their staircases of approach, thus forming one united whole. We give an illustration of the choir screen and ambones of St. Michael's Church at Pavia (A.D. 1188) in which the progressive development of the ambones towards the later gallery-form is well seen (Fig. 64).

<sup>1</sup> This early form in which the ambo or tribune is seen upon a low screen, is very rare in later times, but is not altogether unknown, even in this country. Witness the instance surviving at Nantwich (Fig. 65). The fifteenth century stone pulpit at Cirencester is mounted upon a similar piece of walling, possibly a small section of an original low screen. Choir ambones are also recorded at Soham, Cambs, where Richard Sokborne, Vicar, in his will dated 1502, requests that he may be buried in the chancel of Soham Church, "*inter Ambones scilicet ij lectoria*" (Rev. J. R. Olorenshaw, B.A., "Notes on Church of St. Andrew, Soham").

Lanfranc's Cathedral at Canterbury (repaired in the twelfth century) is described by Gervase as having had a screen with a loft or pulpitum which separated in a manner the tower from the nave, and had in its centre, and on the side towards the nave, an altar of the Holy Cross. Thus it would appear that as early as the twelfth century, and possibly the eleventh, the place of the ambones was taken by a continuous gallery—afterwards known as the Jubé. But it does not appear that in cathedral churches the choirs were, as a general rule, enclosed in this manner until the latter half of the thirteenth century, nor did they always contain fixed stalls, as may be inferred from Durandus, who speaks of the dorsal hangings. Twelfth century Jubés are very rare—that of Naumburg in Bavaria, a massive stone screen and loft of Romanesque architecture, is the only existing instance that occurs to us.

§ 32. M. Viollet-le-Duc says that the great French cathedrals of the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries not only possessed no Jubés, but were not constructed to take them.<sup>1</sup>

The construction of these stone Jubés being very massive, the result was the practical exclusion of the laity from any part in the choir services, and in the case of monastic churches, this separation was still more marked, for in them the participation of the faithful was only an accessory, as the monks had every right to such measure of privacy as they desired. But as the monks had done in their choirs, so the Bishops and Canons elected to do in the cathedrals, and thus we find that subsequently to 1250 the choirs of Chartres, Bourges, Amiens, and Rheims were enclosed, whilst in England the earliest existing choir screen of this order is that of Archbishop Peckham at Canterbury, A.D. 1265-1331.

The early type of continuous gallery over the choir screen received in France the name Jubé, from the custom of the reader's asking a blessing in the words, "*Jube Domne benedicere*," etc. The Jubés were, of course, chiefly used as pulpits, and the term roodloft would be scarcely applicable to these earlier structures, since the rood and its pageantry of figures were not attached to it until later times.

The Jubé or pulpitum was usually erected on a solid wall to the eastward or choir side, and on pillars with open arches to the westward or nave side, and under these there were usually one or more altars for parochial use. The Continental Jubés, says Viollet-le-Duc, had usually one central doorway (see Plates XXV and XXIX), but occasionally there was a triple doorway. Several had two doorways, the principal altar lying between them, and subsidiary altars north and south. Of this class are the Jubés of the Cathedrals of Münster, Hildesheim, and Lubeck, illustrated in Pugin's "Chancel Screens"; but these are of later date. In England the rule is to have a central doorway. This we

<sup>1</sup> He held that the Jubés only appeared in France after 1246, when, in consequence of the Act of Union of the Barons of France, the Bishops were forced to surrender their claim to supervise all law cases. Owing to this restriction they adopted the monastic method of seclusion, and retired with their chapters into the privacy of closed choirs, in the cathedrals which were originally erected for a civil as well as a religious purpose. These vast edifices had, in his opinion, been constructed by the Bishops to afford to the citizens ample space for their civil assemblies as well as their religious ceremonies—this civil jurisdiction by the Bishops being the real link uniting the ancient Basilica and the Christian Church. His view, as affecting the choir enclosures, is now discredited.



see in most of our greater churches—at Canterbury, Wells, Carlisle, Christchurch, York, Lincoln, Ripon, Southwell, etc., where no provision was made for altars ; and at Chester, Exeter, St. David's, Chichester, Norwich, and Glasgow, where there was formerly an altar on each side of the doorway, against the screen.

But the double-doored type is not unknown, and occurs in some of those churches (fairly numerous in England) whose naves were devoted to parochial use, whilst their choirs and transepts formed the Chapel of a Chapter of monks. The roodscreen in these churches is of solid construction, built at the east end of the nave, and forming a complete wall of separation between the two churches. Against the centre of the screen stood the parish altar, often that of the Holy Rood (which must not be confused with the Jesus Altar, which was dedicate in worship of the Holy Name of Jesus), whilst on each side were the doorways used, no doubt, for processional purposes. This arrangement may be seen at St. Albans, Crowland, Boxgrove, Blyth, Ewenny Priory, Bolton Abbey, Waltham, and other places. The same feature existed at Dunstable and Brecon. Some of these churches were Benedictine (as Blyth and Crowland), others, including Waltham and Bolton, were Augustinian.

§ 33. Sometimes in collegio-parochial churches there would appear to have been two screens, both of solid stonework, with lofts over.<sup>1</sup> This seems also the case in connection with Cistercian communities. Such screens are spoken of in the "Rites of Durham," and are as follows :

- (1) The roodscreen, which would be situated at or near the east end of the nave, between pillars west of the lantern. Upon this, or upon a beam above it, would be fixed the Great Rood, and below it the Jesus Altar with doorway on each side, the altar protected by a wooden screen.

Along the head of the stone screen would be seen panels with representations of the Passion, wrought in the Balcony front, behind which there would be a loft open to the choir side.

- (2) Another solid screen to the eastward, with a loft, on which were the organs. This loft was sometimes furnished with a central projection of pulpit form, from which the gospels might be read. This would face the east and be provided with a reading stand or lectern.<sup>2</sup> In some cases there was a well-formed ambo or projection of pulpit form, such as appeared at Ripon (Plate XXVIII A) on the west side of the loft. At Gloucester, the stone pulpit of the fourteenth century was over the west choir door. This feature appears in some foreign jubés (Plates XXIV and XXIX).

The great Cistercian Abbey of Fountains, Mother Church of the Order in England, had a roodscreen (probably furnished with a loft) some distance down the nave, having

<sup>1</sup> For an instance of a stone pulpitum, c. 1337, with a roodscreen in advance of same in a parochial church, we are indebted to Mr. Francis Bond, who speaks of the Church of Ottery St. Mary as having possessed both, until the "restoration" period.

<sup>2</sup> Such lecterns survive at Tattershall, and, until recently, at Merevale. One may be seen at Priziac (Morbihan) in St. Nicolas' Chapel.

two doors, and one bay west of this a wooden screen as a protection to the altar. Then there was a stone jubé or pulpitum of great depth at the choir entrance, one bay westward of the transepts, and it seems probable that beyond this again there must have been a fourth, or sanctuary screen, of lighter sort, making in all four screens. But the apparent complexity becomes clear if we regard those large monastic churches, which possessed a fully-developed nave and choir, and double system of screenwork, as being in reality nothing more nor less than two churches placed end to end, the roodscreen being a reredos and its wooden enclosure the sanctuary of the outer church, whether the same were for parochial use, or as in such cases as Fountains, for the lay brethren, husbandmen, and others attached to the monastery, with sojourners and pilgrims.

The Cistercian Order, a branch of the Benedictines, founded at Cîteaux (Burgundy), A.D. 1098, were transplanted into England in 1128 by Walter Giffard, Bishop of Winchester, and soon became numerous and influential. They built numerous fine monastic churches, of a strongly-marked type, one of the peculiarities of which was the multiplication of internal divisions, taking the form of screens, walls, and differences of level.<sup>1</sup> Usually there are traces of three such divisions, as at Kirkstall Abbey, where one bay of the nave before the choir door was enclosed as a retro-choir for infirm monks.

Dunstable Priory Church (Black Friars) is stated by one writer to have had three screens. (1) A choir screen across the eastern arch of the crossing, having a central door; (2) A roodscreen, of solid stone, carrying a loft, and before which was the "Jesus" altar; (3) A wooden screen, west of the roodscreen, and probably a fence screen. Brecon Priory Church seems to have been furnished with a like number of divisions. In North Germany they are found. At Maulbronn (illustrated in Corroyer's Gothic) there were the same number.

At Bolton (an Augustinian Church) the nave was used in like manner, and a piscina for the rood-altar remains on the south side. Bristol, whose Church of Augustinian canons (now the Cathedral) never had its nave completed, had a choir screen two bays east of the crossing. But in the true Cathedral Churches, there was but one stone screen, serving alike as roodscreen and pulpitum, and this had no central altar. At St. David's the rood was on the west, and the ambo on the east side of the screen.<sup>2</sup> In the "Rites of Durham" we are told that the organs were over the centre of the loft on the east side, and adjoining them, probably immediately in front, was the projection of the ambo.<sup>3</sup>

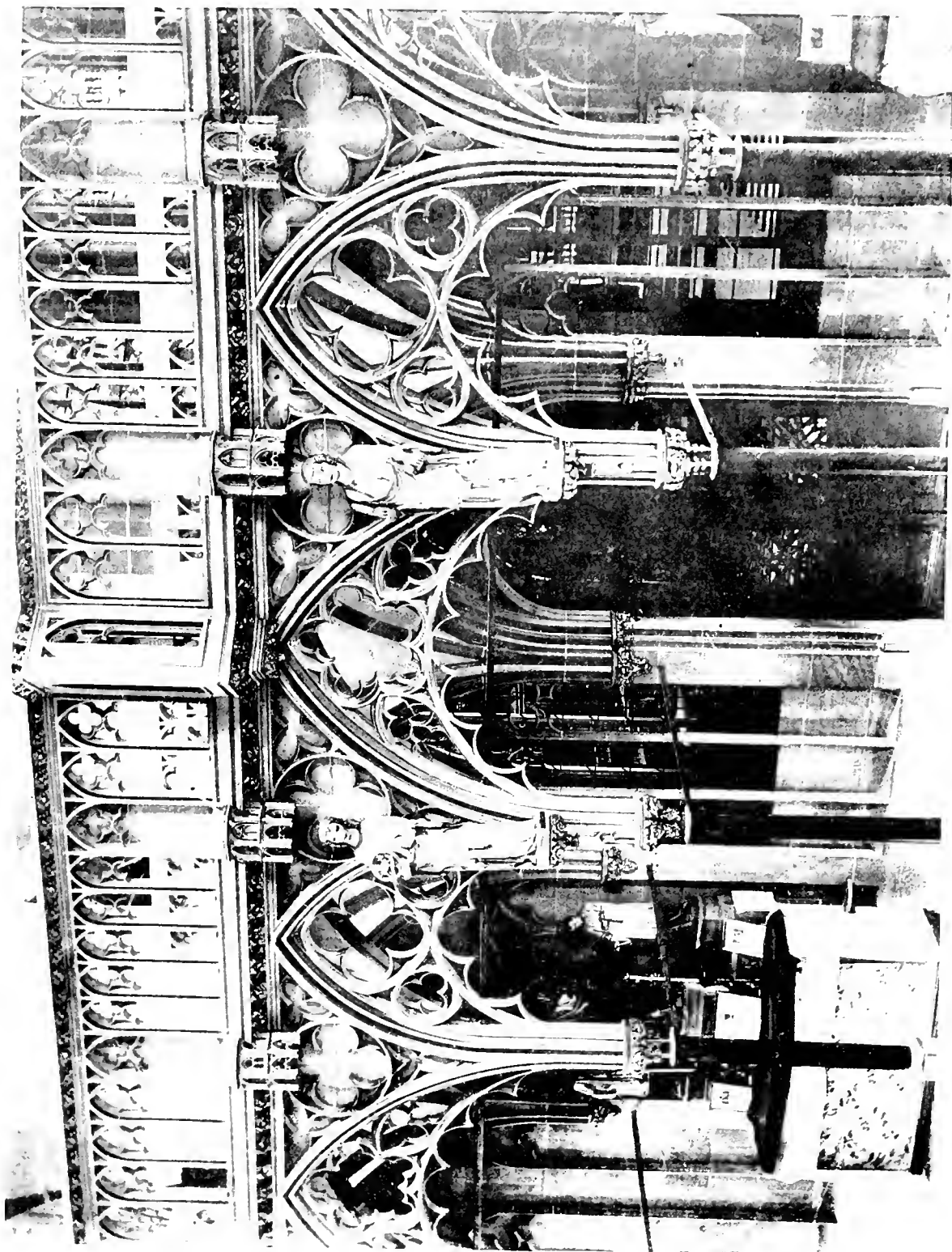
The same record speaks of the "pair of organs over the quire door," and a "Letterne of wood like unto a pulpit standynge and adjoining to the wood organs, over the quire door where they had been wont to sing the nine lessons in the old time on principall dayes, standing with their faces towards the high altar."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is to be noted that the Benedictines and the Cistercians preserved the use of the Lenten Veil drawn between choir and altar, and this is in use to this day in Cistercian churches.

<sup>2</sup> *Ecclesiologist* v, 119. In the same volume, p. 163, the sanctuary screen is also described.

<sup>3</sup> Surtees Soc. Edn. 1903, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> By the Salisbury Use the eagle lectern for the Gospel stood in the loft.



EARLY STONE JUBÉ: OBERWESEL, GERMANY



§ 34. The Jubés in the Cathedral Churches perpetuated the uses of the early ambones, and with the advance of the mediæval period other uses accrued. In the Jubé of Beauvais in Lent a lesson was read from the office (Thiers), and from others absolution was given on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, the Blessed Sacrament was there placed, and reserved on Good Friday, Mass was said, relics exposed, palms blessed, also candles for days of Purification, and ashes.

We begin also to hear of altars on the roodloft, as well as beneath it. On the Jubé of Lyons was an altar in which the Mass of the Cross was said every day after Matins. There was also an altar on the Jubé of the Collegiate Church on Notre Dame de Cleri.

Coming again to our own country we find records of the same use of the Jubés of roodlofts in the Cathedral Churches in the fourteenth century, as the following extract from the Lichfield Episcopal Registrars will show :

“ Bishop Scrope founded a chantry called the Chantry of Richard II at the  
 “ Altar of the Holy Cross on the roodscreen of Lichfield Cathedral. Bishop Burghill  
 “ in 1409 changed the site of the chantry to the altar of a newly-constructed chapel,  
 “ by Bishop Scrope’s tomb near the high altar, because of the peril incurred by an  
 “ old priest or one in bad health celebrating in the roodloft, and because the faithful  
 “ who were weak and infirm could not come to the altar or the Holy Cross without  
 “ bodily inconvenience.”<sup>1</sup>

The foregoing is evidence of a tendency of which we find traces elsewhere, to remove the altars attached to the screens to a more convenient position. Thus, the altars which in the earlier churches appear either against the western face of the screen, or against the walls immediately to the north and south of it (as at Ranworth) were relegated in the later churches to specially formed chapels, of which we have abundant instances. The later churches were more frequently aisled than those of earlier date, and we often find that where the nave alone is aisled the easternmost bay of each aisle is enclosed by screenwork, forming a rectangular junction with the roodscreen on its western side as at Dennington, Suffolk (Plate XXVI A), and Clyffe Pypard, Wilts, and in these enclosures lie the altars. Next we find in churches of the Devonshire type, the aisles are prolonged into chapels or side chancels in which the altars are placed, the space before the screen being cleared, so that in these churches the roodscreen extends its magnificent breadth in clear view from north to south, becoming an image-bearing screen or iconostasis, like its Eastern counterpart, and displaying upon its lower, as well as its upper panels, a continuous series of figures of saints, prophets, apostles, kings, virgins, and martyrs, etc.

The arrangement at Ranworth is typical of those churches which, instead of being aisled, were provided with a very wide nave allowing a considerable wall space on each side of the chancel-opening. At Ranworth, not only the sites of the altars remain, but their fine reredos work, in continuation of the character of the screen.

<sup>1</sup> “ Lichfield Episcopal Registers,” Burghill, f. 206, communicated by Rev. R. M. Sergeantson.

§ 35. Near, or about the beginning of the fourteenth century, it is believed that the custom of introducing the roodloft as a feature of the parish churches of England, began. Hitherto it had been characteristic only of the larger churches, and, as we have seen, its uses were such as would hardly apply to the parish church, since these lofts were chiefly meant for rather stately ceremonies, often of a public nature—civil as well as religious. But there were at least two reasons which operated to promote the erection of such lofts in the parish churches. One was the increase of hagiology, or the cult of saints, and the desire to represent them in a position of honour by affixing their carved or painted figures in a prominent place where all the worshippers might see, and this led to the raising of the screen into the character of an iconostasis, and the consequent provision of an enriched upper tier or series of panels above the screen following a custom which had from time immemorial been observed in the Eastern churches, where the screens were surmounted by a row of panels, very often twelve in number, bearing painted figures of the Apostles. Of this custom we find the exact counterpart in England in such instances as Mitcheldean and Long Melford,<sup>1</sup> and with this the Great Rood which had hitherto been an independent feature was brought into more intimate union.

§ 36. The part played by the Rood as a factor in determining the form and importance of our chancel screens must not be lost sight of, for there is no doubt that it takes a large share in the genesis of the loft in our parish churches.

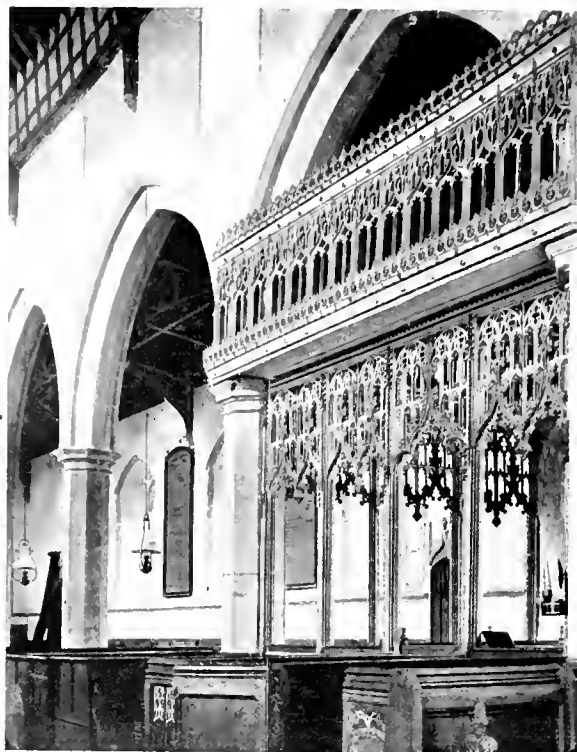
From earliest days it had been customary to place over the entrance to the chancel a symbolic figure of the Redeemer upon the Cross with outstretched hands. This was at first a mystical figure, draped and crowned according to the older ideal, but in later times the Latin conception of the suffering Christ, the more human representation, took the place of the glorified figure of earlier days.

Sometimes this Great Rood was otherwise placed. In the Saxon churches it appears to have been situated occasionally over the south or main entrance, although Bradford-on-Avon gives us a suggestion of its having been over the chancel arch—*vide* the adoring angel-figures still existing. At Breamore, Hants, is an instance of the tenth century, and here we have the figures of Saint Mary and Saint John on each side. At Headbourne Worthy, it is at the west end of the church. At Romsey there is a stone rood against the west wall of the south transept, and other external situations are recorded. But very early we find the rood given a place of honour within the church, not only as a fresco or mosaic, but as a sculptured figure, and we begin to find in the Western church these roods placed upon a beam across the nave or choir.

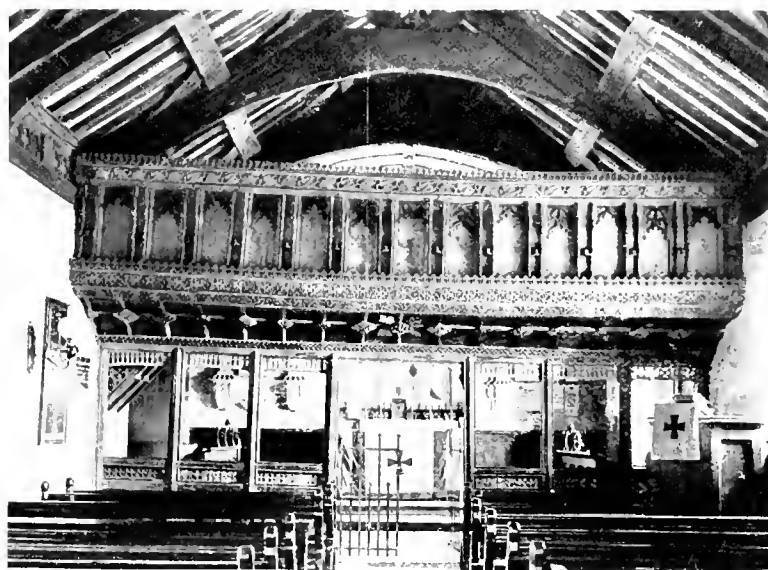
There is an instance, said to date originally from about the ninth century, at Locmaria, near Quimper, in Brittany, in which the figure stands centrally upon a beam in front of the chancel arch. Another instance of the early type of rood is seen in the example at Lucca (Fig. 66), in which the figure is purely symbolic in character. It is draped, according to the earlier and less material conception. The custom of placing the rood upon a beam

<sup>1</sup> J. M. Neale: "Views of Collegiate and Parish Churches," Vol. II.

PLATE XXVI



(A) GALLERIES OVER SIDE SCREENS, DENNINGTON, SUFFOLK



(B) WEST FACE OF ROOD LOFT LLANEGRYN





was adopted in our churches at least as early as the eleventh century, although they were probably not general until the fourteenth or fifteenth century. A rood is recorded at Battle Abbey A.D. 1095. Gervase, the monk of Canterbury, relates that over the screen in Lanfranc's Cathedral (which was built A.D. 1070 to 1077) was a beam which sustained a great cross, two cherubim, and the images of St. Mary and St. John the Apostle. Thus we see the origin of the term "roodscreen," the word "rood" being derived from the Anglo-Saxon "rode," or cross bearing the figure of Our Lord.

§ 37. The chancel wall had been the most natural and convenient place in the early churches for the affixing of the rood, but when the chancels became more open, the custom of placing the rood upon a beam may be assumed to have become correspondingly more usual. When ultimately the framed screen became definitely established as the substitute for the mural one, it soon was made to serve purposes other than the primary one of an effective division. Pugin points this out in the following words :

"Like every object generated in necessity, the Church soon turned them to a most edifying account, and whilst the great screen was adorned with the principal events of Our Lord's Life and Passion, surmounted by the Great Rood, the lateral walls were carved with edifying sculptures and sacred histories."

In many churches the rood-beam appears at a great height over the screen, and there is no permanent means of access apparent. At High Ham, Somerset, where the rood and figures stood upon the beam, this was elevated above the lofty chancel arch, and no structural approach seems provided (Plate LII).

At Banwell, Meare, and other places in the district, the beam ran across at a rather less elevation, but still clear of the loft. At Cullompton, Devon, it was far above, quite out of reach, but here the Great Rood is believed to have been suspended beneath it, since it footed upon a carved "Golgotha" which rested upon the floor of the roodloft. But the instances last quoted are all late fifteenth century ones, and we may take it that the older position for the rood and rood-beam is one to a large extent independent of the screen, but with the advent of the loft, the rood-beam is gradually brought more and more into connection with it, until at last we find that the rood is often made to rest, with all its pageantry, upon the rail of the loft itself, or framed to pedestals rising from the loft



FIG. 66

itself, whilst upon the loft, in imitation of the great Jubés, would be found an altar of the Holy Rood.<sup>1</sup>

This is then the primary purpose for which the roodloft is introduced into our parish churches, and necessity for the provision of a deep (*i.e.* broad) floor, of very ample area would be seen, if it was, as we believe records appear to suggest, that it was the practice to allow the faithful here to ascend to pay their homage, and to worship at the foot of the altar. The provision of rushes in the Tavistock record implies the traffic of many feet.

The annals of church restoration in England during the last century are full of instances of deep lofts, sometimes occupying the whole depth of the space beneath a central tower, as at Winsham, or Axbridge in Somerset—and Box, Wilts, where the levels of the ancient loft and the more modern ringers' gallery which succeeded it may still be traced in the marks of the joist-stoppings in the walls. At Yetminster, Dorset, there was a loft of great depth going right across the church, and furnished with several staircases.<sup>2</sup>

The earlier type of loft in the parish church was thus a spacious floor or platform, and it was supported usually by a cancellated screen at its eastward boundary, and a beam with posts, or a light arcaded screen at the westward side.

A whole series of double screens of this nature still exist in a more or less imperfect condition. The Welsh examples, as Llanellieu (Plate XLIIA) and Llangeitho (Fig. 46), show open arcades. That of Guilden Morden, Cambs, has a complete double screen with flat loft over. The screen at Greywell, Hants, has cancelli under the western side. Others, like Burton (Petworth), Sussex, have a beam with brackets for the support on the western balcony.

§ 38. There were some instances in which the loft was constructed at a comparatively low elevation, and cases are recorded in which apparently two lofts or galleries existed,

<sup>1</sup> There is evidence of such an altar existing in an English parish church in the fourteenth century, for in the Tavistock records we find an entry, dated 1392, of a charge for rushes brought to lay at the foot of the altar of the Holy Cross in the roodloft. At Cullompton is still preserved the wooden Golgotha, cut from a huge baulk of oak, which lay on the floor of the roodloft, and into which the Cross was mortised. At Saint Herbot, Brittany, on the top of the screen may be seen a similar feature, and here are also preserved the whole "pageant" of symbolic figures which we know originally surmounted our own lofts. As to the former existence of altars upon our roodlofts there remain also structural evidences in the piscine which survive in the walls of the lofts, some of which are mentioned by Bloxam, who was of opinion that they were very common in England.

<sup>2</sup> At Yetminster the loft stretched over the whole of the east bay of the nave, and of the two aisles. There are traces of a wooden staircase to it having wound around the north-east column of the nave, the stone of which has been cut away in places in order to fit the staircase to it. There were three altars upon the loft—one in the centre, with two windows to give it light, over the chancel arch—the others at north and south, with two, and one window respectively. The late J. H. Parker considered that the central altar would have been dedicated to the Blessed Virgin; but we are not aware of his reason for thinking so. There were two other altars (connected with chantries) beneath the loft (*Proc. Somerset Archl. Soc.*, xx, p. 62).

At Box, Wilts, are traces of a very deep roodloft under the Central Tower. The stairs are just inside the western arch on the north side, and these give access to two upper openings, one by the N. side of arch on its western face, and the other inside the arch on the N. with the tower. There are marks of a floor at a height of about ten feet, running the whole depth of the tower from west to east (nave to chancel) and a second floor (perhaps raised later) about three feet higher. This shows that the screen stood in front of the nave archway, and the roodloft thus had a great depth. It was probably an early instance.

one above another. This appears to have been the case at Brecon Priory, and evidences of a like arrangement are visible at Berkeley and elsewhere where there are marks of two openings in the wall, one above another.

If, as some have supposed, the early lofts were used occasionally for the performance of "miracle" or "mystery" plays, then one could understand that by keeping their elevation low, they would remain to a far greater extent visible from the nave. But the later lofts with their superior elevation and high balcony fronts would be singularly ill-adapted for such displays, which indeed could scarcely by any possibility have been visible from them, even if their narrower dimensions had permitted the players freedom of action, which is doubtful. The upper gallery, where such existed, would have been an approach to the rood and pageant of figures upon the rood-beam when suspended high above the screen, so that the acolyte or attendant having charge of these things might trim the lamps, light and extinguish the tapers, deck the images with garlands on feast days, and shroud them with veils in Lent. The great Lenten Veil hanging from its hooks in the chancel arch, would also need facilities of access.

At Cirencester there are traces of an arrangement similar to that at Berkeley—there being provision in the roodloft staircase for a second exit at a superior height—namely at the level of the rood-beam, along which there was probably a light rail or gallery.

§ 39. Roodloft stairs are not found built in the church walls until the fifteenth century, and the walls of older churches were frequently pulled about and reconstructed in the later times in order to form the staircase which generally assumed the shape of a turret. The "vyse," or stair,<sup>1</sup> was occasionally utilised for further access to the roof. We find fifteenth century roodloft stairs in north and south walls, more often in the former perhaps, but there seems no rule about this. In Devon churches they are frequently duplicated, being found in the walls of both aisles. In churches built in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the stair turret becomes a regular feature. In the older churches access to the loft was by means of an internal wooden stair or step-ladder.

§ 40. We have spoken of the cult of saints, and the provision of altars of the Holy Rood as furnishing one reason for the construction of lofts and galleries over the screens. The other reason which operated in causing the erection of roodlofts in our parish churches was that which Micklethwaite<sup>2</sup> has made clear in his writings—namely, the increasingly elaborate nature of the polyphonic music which accompanied the services in our churches in the century or century and a half immediately preceding the Reformation, and the consequent need for the provision of space in a gallery over the screen for organist and musicians. As this use developed, so the older one decreased. Earlier roodlofts occasionally show the pulpitum over the door on the west side—we still see this at Coates-by-Stow, and remains of the same feature at Hullavington and Sleaford—and there are no pulpits "in plano" known in our parish churches earlier

<sup>1</sup> Whence the word "parvise"—the little room on the stairway.

<sup>2</sup> "Parish Churches in 1548": J. T. Micklethwaite, *Archæological Journal*, Vol. XXXV.

than the end of the fourteenth century, and even then their employment was only introduced by slow degrees.

Towards the close of the fifteenth century pulpits would appear to have been erected in increasing numbers. The edict of 1547 calls for the provision of pulpits in those churches which did not possess them. Sixteenth century pulpits are fairly abundant in certain parts of England, and, from the character of the work upon them, it not infrequently appears that some of these are of Post-Reformation date, as they are enriched by the spoils of the roodlofts, if not constructed from their remains. Some of the fifteenth and sixteenth century pulpits of Devonshire and Somerset are compositions of singular beauty, and from their striking analogy of design to the screens and roodlofts which were erected concurrently with them, are valuable as evidence of the probable nature of the workmanship and design in the now destroyed balcony fronts of the lofts themselves. We give illustrations of two Devonshire pulpits in order to show this class of work (Plate LXXVIII), and an example from Somerset (Plate LIX).

The point to be observed in relation to these pulpits of the fifteenth and sixteenth century is that they were erected concurrently with the lofts, and the inevitable inference is that the lofts could not any longer have been used authoritatively for the purposes of a pulpit. That they were generally employed in the fifteenth century and the times preceding the Reformation as music galleries is, however, abundantly clear, and in the present writer's opinion this view is borne out by facts which establish it beyond any possibility of doubt. Indeed, if proof from antiquity were wanting, the theory would still be well supported by the evidence of subsequent changes, and by the custom still preserved in the Reformed Church wherein the musicians' gallery never ceased until quite modern times to play its part, though banished in increasing numbers during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century to the west end of the church on account (most probably) of the unwieldiness of the organs then erected.

In rare cases the more ancient use of the loft as a pulpit would appear to have been perpetuated to modern times; and if this has been the custom continuously, then here we have a fact of great antiquarian interest. In two Devonshire parishes,<sup>1</sup> at least, the pulpit is known to have stood upon the roodloft until a comparatively recent date, and the same custom is spoken of in a third parish, Blackawton, though here, as well as in the two other cases mentioned, the screens have been mutilated or broken up within recent years.<sup>2</sup>

§ 41. With the change in the use of the roodlofts and the removal to another place of the altars which had in earlier days occupied positions upon their floors, came a great alteration in their shape and construction.

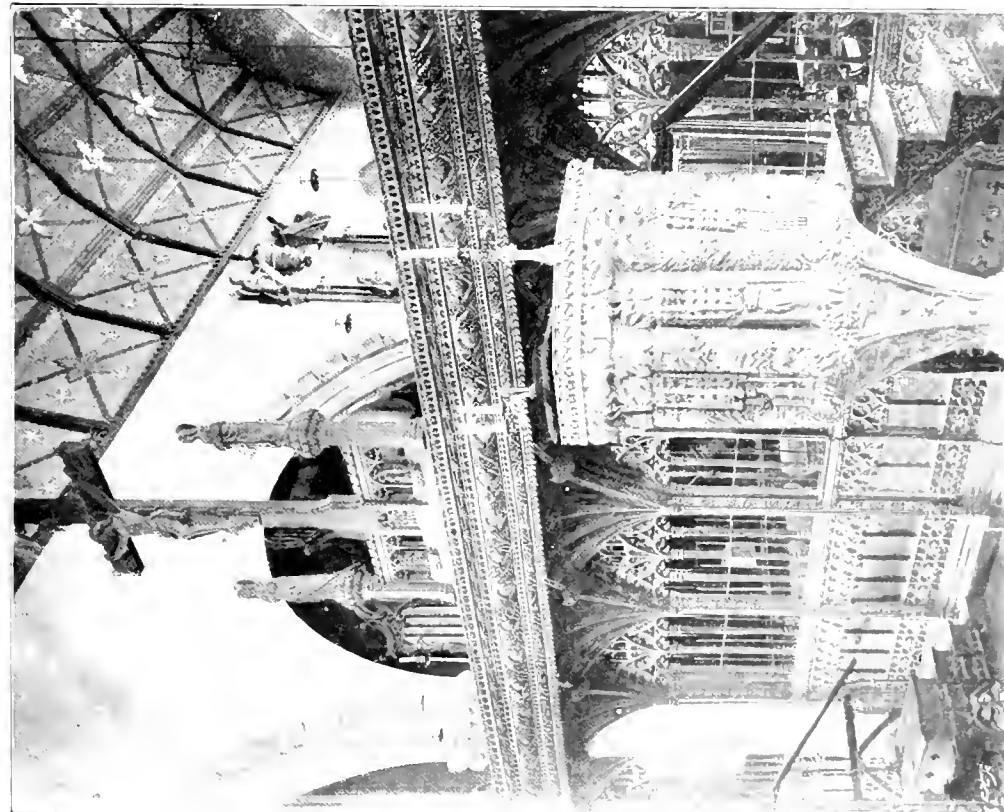
The earlier lofts, as we have seen, were very deep, and were formed by floors resting upon screens or beams at their eastern extremities. But the fifteenth century loft is

<sup>1</sup> Viz.: West Alvington and Malborough. *Ecclesiologist*, vi, pp. 121, 122.

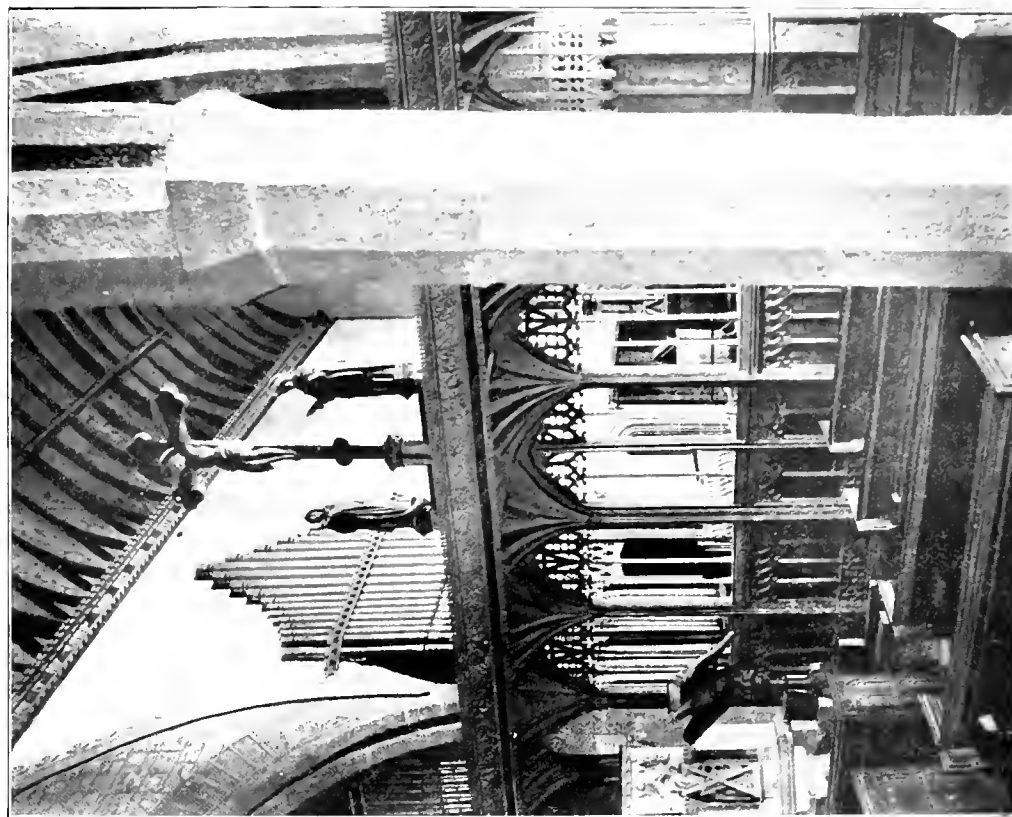
<sup>2</sup> The screens of Malborough, West Alvington, and South Huish were broken up by an incumbent who has attained an unenviable record as a hater of screens.

# PLATE XXVII

SHOWING THE ROOD WITH ITS ACCOMPANYING IMAGES OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN AND SAINT JOHN RESTORED  
TO ITS TRADITIONAL PLACE ABOVE THE ROOD-SCREEN IN TWO WEST COUNTRY CHURCHES



(A) — DARTMOUTH



(B) — KILN, S. DAVEN



usually a much narrower one, and is supported commonly by a single screen which runs centrally beneath it and upholds it on both sides by a bracketed framework which the ribbed vaulting encases and conceals. These later lofts vary in width, but their average is from five to six feet, or thereabouts. The earlier lofts were often more than double this depth.

Sometimes we find there is a shallow bay or projection formed in the cornice jutting out to the eastward over the choir door, and designed to give additional space for some purpose. At Merevale this takes the form of a large square projection, supported upon pillars. At Montgomery and Dunster we find the feature less pronounced in form, and the most probable explanation is that these spaces were provided to give room for an organ.

We find in our old church records many instances of the use of organs upon the roodlofts. In the "Rites of Durham," above quoted, mention is made of the "pair of organs over the quire door" in the eastern screen. Until lately one or two of these mediæval roodloft organs actually survived. One was at Tong, in Shropshire; another, of which some portions have been preserved, is at Old Radnor. J. T. Micklethwaite says of the (later) roodlofts, that certain parts of the services were sung there and they were occupied by minstrels, vocal and instrumental—whom it was the custom for well-to-do parishes to hire to sing the service on High Days. These minstrels sang pricksong, whereas the plainsong singers sat in the quire.

The pulpit-like projections seen at Coates-by-Stow and Sleaford may have been used in this manner by the choristers. Coates Church has a pulpit on the floor of date seemingly coeval with the screen, and its presence suggests a different use for the pulpitum in the loft.

The following extracts are adduced further to illustrate the pre-Reformation use of organs in the roodloft.

In the accounts of St. Petrock Church, Exeter, the following occurs:

"1473-4 (Edw. IV). To Walter Abraham, for making a seat in le Roode-lofte, when playing on the organys . . . . . 7s. 0d."

From the accounts for Louth Steeple, c. 1509:

"For setting of the Flemish organ in the Roodloft by four days . . . . . xxd."

From documents connected with the Beauchamp Chapel, Warwick, collected by Dugdale:

"Richard Bird and John Haynes, citizens and carpenters of London xii Feb., 28 Hen. VI, do covenant to make and set up . . . finely and workmanly, a parclose of timber about an organ loft ordained to stand over the west dore of the said chapelle according to patterns, all these things to be made, set, fastened, joyned, and in as good sort as those in the quire of S. Marie's Church in Warwick."

Ex. Croscombe accounts:

"1487-8. Item Pay'd to Thomas Rogg for pleying at organs . . . . . iijs. iiijd.

"1488-9. Item. To Thomas More for pleying at orgenys . . . . . vj, viijd."

1528. St. Peter, Sheffield:

John Wickersley willed that his executors should "cause the loft in the Roode chapel wher th' organnes now standes, to be new buylded."

Test. Eborac. (Surtees Soc.), v, 247.

Ex Inventory of Edward VI Commissioners, Lyngfield (Surrey), 1547:

"Item: ij peyr of orgens

xxiiij cuppis of latten for the rodeloft to set lightes upon."

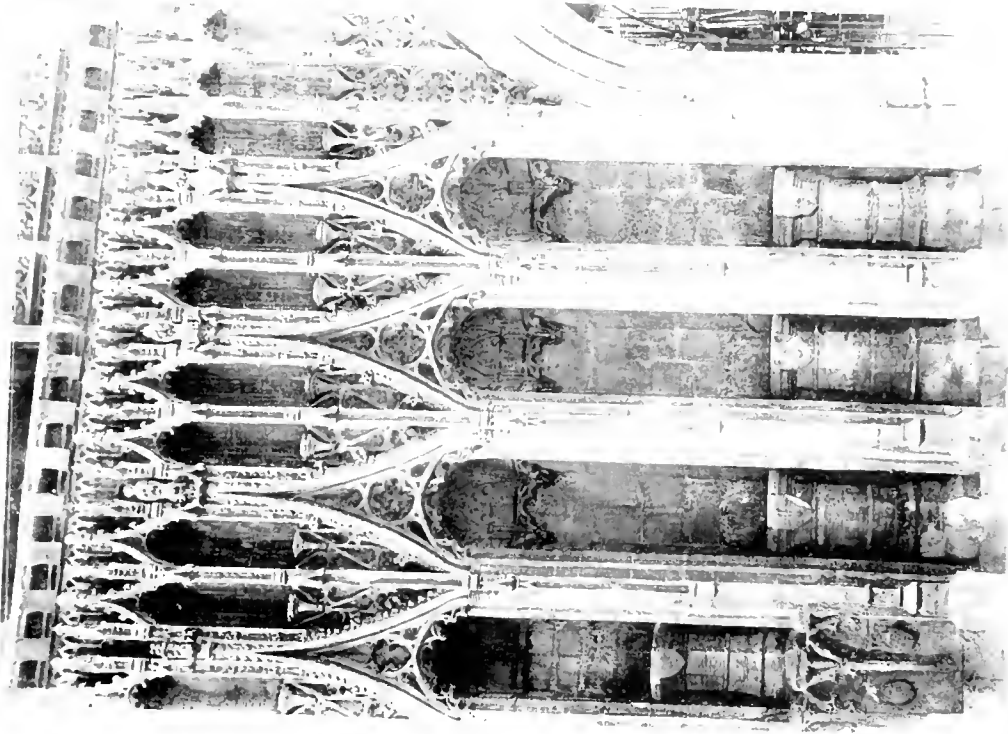
Do. Farnham, S. Andrew:

"Item: An olde payre of organys which had xxvj pipes."

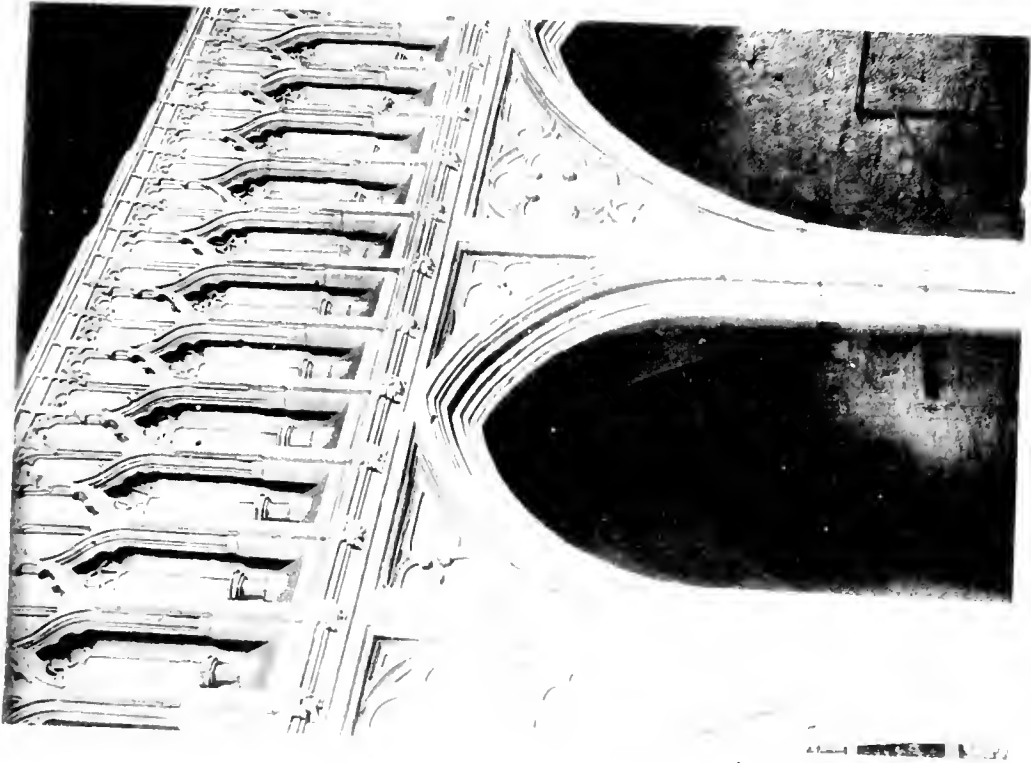




PLATE XXVIII  
ENGLISH CATHEDRAL JUBES



(A) RIFON



(B) CHICHESTER



eighteenth century, the western gallery had become quite an accepted and usual feature. Such are the factors which determined the final disappearance of the loft over the chancel screen.

The roodlofts of England and Wales still survive in sufficient numbers to enable us to judge fairly well of their average character. We give our readers a list of those surviving and those recorded, and it is hoped that with the aid of the several illustrations which, largely by the courtesy of friends, we are able to reproduce, a good general idea of their character may be gained.

A few examples of Brittany lofts are added, in order that a comparison may be instituted—those of Kerfous (Plate XIX), Lambader, and Saint Fiacre (Plate XX) are typical specimens and perfectly preserved. Would that our own iconoclasts had left even one in all its ancient glories—but we must be thankful for what imperfect remains have still been spared us, in spite of man's violence and the ravages of time.

### § 43. STONE ROODLOFTS OF GREAT BRITAIN

*including Stone Jubés or Pulpita*

BEDS.	Dunstable Priory.	NORTHANTS.	Peterborough (modern).
BERKS.	Windsor, St. George's Chapel.	NOTTS.	Southwell Minster (fourteenth century).
DEVON.	Exeter Cathedral.	OXFORD.	St. Mary (c. 1825). [(modern).
ESSEX.	Waltham Abbey.		COWLEY. Hospital Chapel
BRISTOL.	Cathedral (fragments).	SOMERSET.	Wells Cathedral.
"	" Modern screen (Iconostasis only without loft behind).	SUSSEX.	Chichester Cathedral (Arundel screen).
GLOUCESTER.	Cathedral.	WILTS.	Malmesbury Abbey (Roodscreen).
HANTS.	Christchurch Priory.	YORKS.	York Minster.
HERTS.	St. Albans Cathedral (Roodloft).	"	Ripon Cathedral. <sup>1</sup>
KENT.	Canterbury Cathedral (1307).	"	Howden Collegiate Church.
"	Rochester Cathedral (west face modern).	WALES.	St. David's Cathedral.
LEICES.	Mount St. Bernard's (modern).	"	Ewenny Abbey (Roodloft).
LINCS.	Crowland Abbey.	SCOTLAND.	Glasgow Cathedral.
"	Lincoln Cathedral.	"	Melrose Abbey.
"	Tattershall Church.	"	Lincluden Chapel.

The Stone Balcony fronts, still remaining for the most part, exhibit a series of canopied recesses for the reception of statuary, but in the case of Southwell, and some others, a simpler treatment is indicated. At Southwell the upper tier of canopies has a delicate tracery filling. The divisions of the roodloft at Exeter Cathedral were filled with paintings—replaced in the days of the Stuarts by others which still survive, showing Old and New Testament subjects. At Chichester, the beautiful Arundel screen, now re-erected in the Campanile Tower, presents a series of hollow niches, their heads delicately vaulted within the canopies and each still containing the pedestal which once supported the image of a saint (Plate XXVIII).

More luxuriant in detail, and of far greater freedom of design are those roodlofts of Northern Europe, two of which are the Jubés of Lierre, and Aerschot in Belgium (Plate XXIX). But, in spite of their untrammelled richness, it is a question whether the

<sup>1</sup> Said to come from Fountains. There are also traces of a roodscreen in the west of the crossing—corbels for beam, and piscina for altar.

restrained effect of the English design is not the more permanently satisfying. Any sense of meagreness or formality would disappear with the addition of the statuary and the consequent filling of the vacancies in the niche work.

#### § 44. WOODEN ROODLOFTS OR ORGAN-LOFTS OF GREAT BRITAIN

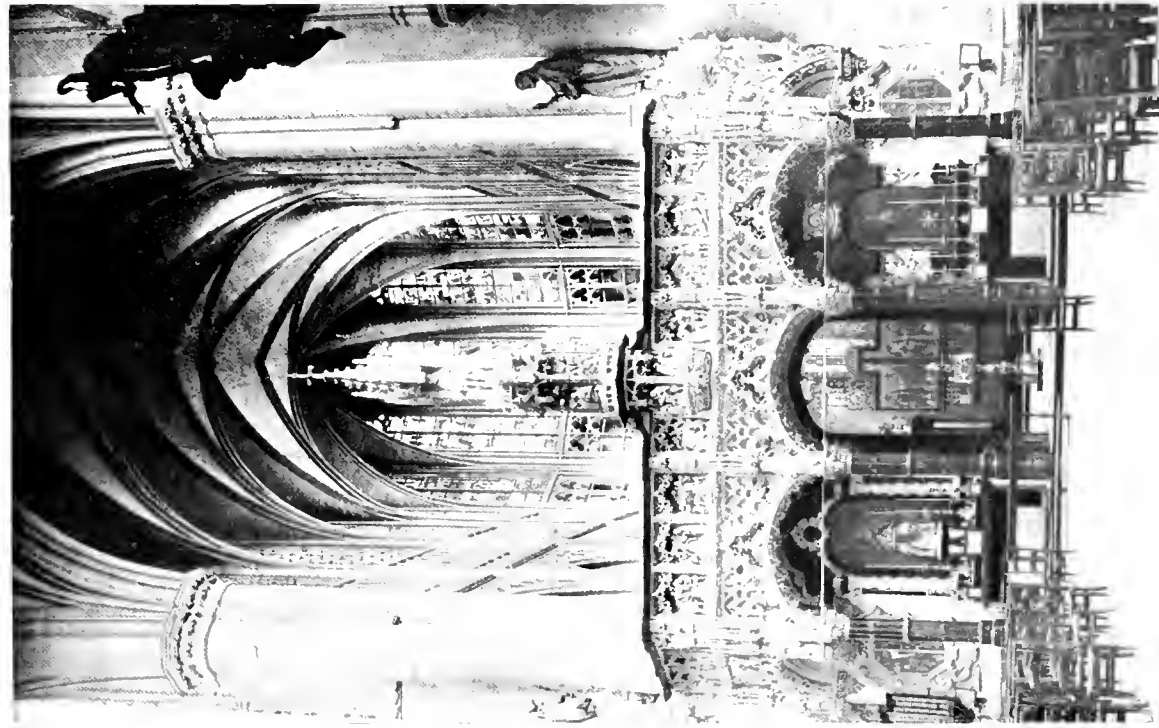
BEDS. . . .	FELMERSHAM	MONMOUTH .	LLANGWM.
BERKS. . . .	ABINGDON, S. Helen (19th cent.)		RANWICK (framework only).
	CHILDREY (part).	NORFOLK . .	NORWICH, ST. JOHN TIMBER-
	MARCHAM } removed.		HILL (reconstructed).
	DRAYTON } removed.		SHERINGHAM.
	SUTTON COURTNEY (in Hall of		TUNSTEAD (remains).
	Manor House), said to have		WORSTED (to Tower screen).
	come from a church in the		
	North of England.	NORTHUMBER-	
	WARFIELD.	LAND . . .	HEXHAM.
BUCKS. . . .	HILLESDEN.	NOTTS. . . .	EGMANTON (modern).
CAMBS. . . .	King's College Chapel.		STRELLEY (part).
	GAMLINGAY (fragments).	OXON.. . . .	ADDERBURY (restored).
	SWAFFHAM PRIORS (modern).		BODDICOT (remains).
DORSET . . .	BUCKHORN WESTON (part).		CHARLTON-ON-OTMOOR
" . . . .	POYNTINGTON (part).		(canopy). [(modern).
DEVON . . . .	ATHERINGTON.		COWLEY FATHERS' CHURCH
	COCKINGTON (new church),		HOOK NORTON (recently re-
	modern.		moved).
	KENTON (restored), canopied		SYDENHAM (remains).
	for paintings or bas reliefs.		HORSEPATH } Post - Reforma-
	LEW TRENCHARD (recon-		WOODSTOCK } tion, now re-
	structed, with paintings).		removed.
	LITTLEHAM (reconstructed,	SHROPSHIRE..	HUGHLEY.
	traceryed).	SOMERSET . .	EAST BRENT (post Reformation,
	MARWOOD (east balcony).		now at west end).
	STAVERTON (reconstructed), do.		FROME (modern).
CORNWALL. .	BREAGE (modern).		LONG SUTTON (reconstructed,
	BLISLAND (reconstructed).		with organs over).
	CRANTOCK (ditto).		RODNEY STOKE (post Reforma-
DURHAM. . .	DARLINGTON (late substitute).		tion).
ESSEX. . . .	HALLINGBURY, GREAT (part).	STAFFORDSHIRE	Sandon (1686). Illustrated
GLO'S. . . .	DOWN AMPNEY (recent).		(Fig. 77).
	WOODCHESTER PRIORY (19th	SUFFOLK. . .	DENNINGTON (side galleries).
	cent.).	SURREY . . .	COMPTON (12th cent.).
HANTS. . . .	WINCHESTER, St. John Baptist.	WARWICK . .	MEREVALE.
	WARNBOROUGH, SOUTH.		SOLIHULL (restored).
HEREFORDSHIRE	BRILLEY (part standing, 1867).		WORMLEIGHTON (fragments).
	HOPE MANSELL (part).	WILTS. . . .	AVEBURY.
	ST. MARGARET'S (plain panels		CHERRHILL (panels of gallery).
	for paintings).		COMPTON BASSETT (panels of
HUNTS. . . .	ST. IVES (modern), with organs.		gallery, now a pew).
KENT . . . .	KEMSING, reconstructed (open		CORSHAM (remains).
	tracery panels).		EDINGTON.
LANCS. . . .	MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL (re-		HULLAVINGTON.
	SEFTON (part). [constructed).		MERE (restored).
LINCS. . . .	COATES-BY-STOW.	WORCESTER-	
	SLEAFORD (part).	SHIRE . . .	BESFORD.
	TATERSHALL (stone).		LEIGH.
LONDON . . .	Several good modern lofts.		STRENSHAM (with painted
MONMOUTH .	BETTWS NEWYDD.	YORKS. . . .	FLAMBOROUGH. [figures).
	LLANGEVIEW.		HUBBERHOLME.
			LEEDS (one or two good lofts
			in modern churches).

For Welsh Lofts see "Wales" list of screens. There are nineteen in the list, but of these three or four are fragmentary or doubtful.

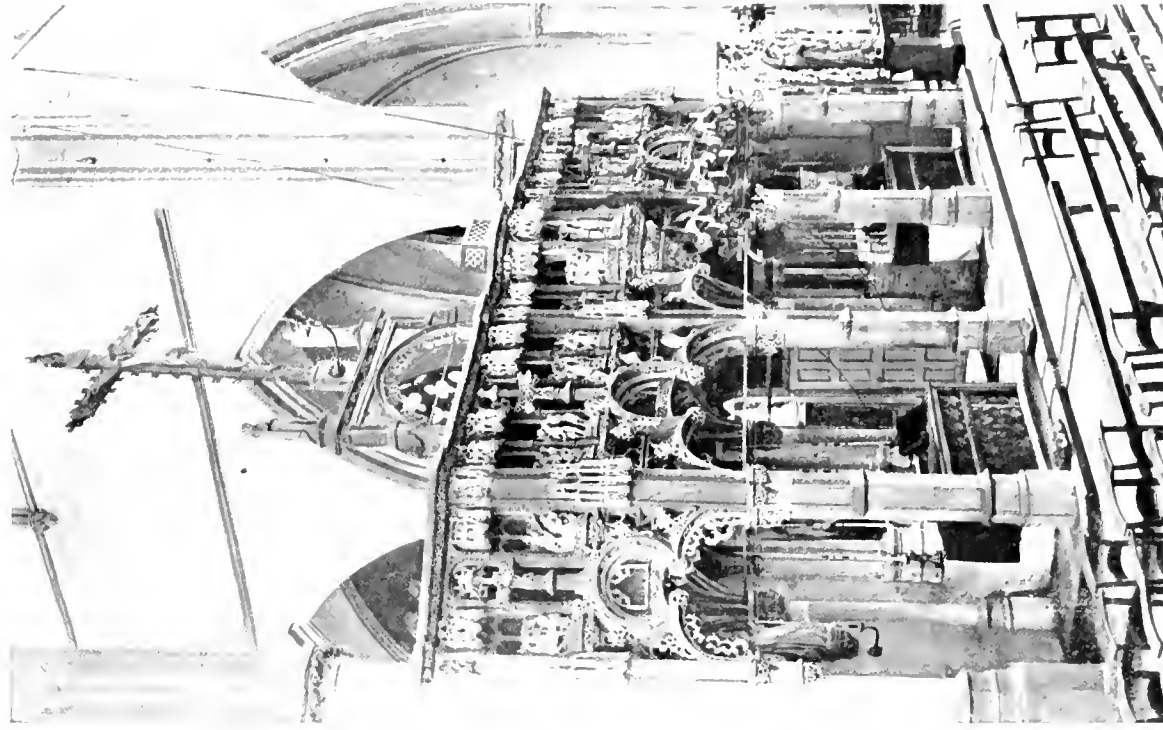
The list of modern lofts does not claim to be even approximately exhaustive.

# PLATE XXIX

## TWO FLEMISH JUBÉS



(A) LIERKE



(B) VERSCHOT



Of the lofts yet remaining in our parish churches, the larger number show a simple treatment of traceried panels.

At Sheringham, Norfolk, is an instance of an open framework, with light tracery only in the heads of the panels. The loft now placed in the church of St. John, Timberhill, Norwich, is of like character, rather more elaborate. There is another at Derwen, in Denbighshire, of the same order. The panels at Gamlingay, Cambs, now placed over the tower screen (Fig. 67), are of this nature.

That which now decorates the Hall of Sutton Courtney Manor House, Berks, has another series of pierced traceried panels, of early fifteenth century type.

More frequently the panels are boarded in solidly, furnishing a background for paintings. Such we see at Edington, Corsham, and Hullavington, Wilts; Warfield, Berks; Merevale, Warwick; St. Margaret's, Herefordshire (Plate XXXA); Coates, Lincs; Strensham, Worcs; and such Welsh examples as Llanfilo (Plate XXXB). At Strensham alone [excluding Hexham, which was not a parish church] are the figure paintings

preserved in this position, though, as is well known, a great number of those which appeared on the lower panels of the screens were suffered to remain.

The Strensham series consists of twenty-three panels, unfortunately re-painted in modern times, but still most interesting. They comprise saints, kings, apostles, etc. We illustrate a group of these panels (Plate XXXIXA).

Next we have a series of examples in which the panels of the gallery front are filled with more elaborate tracery, occupying the whole of their surface; in fact they are solid panels, perforated with an elaborate fretwork of geometrical, curvilinear, and other forms. The most perfect and characteristic example of this sort is in the loft at Llangwm in Monmouthshire. In the fragments of the old loft at Newtown, Montgomery, we see another. At Partrishow, or Patricio, in the same county, the pattern of the tracery panels is like that of the window-tracery of the Perpendicular period (Plate XXXIA). We find the same at Hubberholme, Yorks (Plate XXXIIA), and on the east side of the screens at Llanwnnog, Montgomery (Plate XXXIB), or Llanrwst, in Denbighshire (Plate XXXIIIA and B). At Littleham, near Bideford in Devon, the new roodloft has

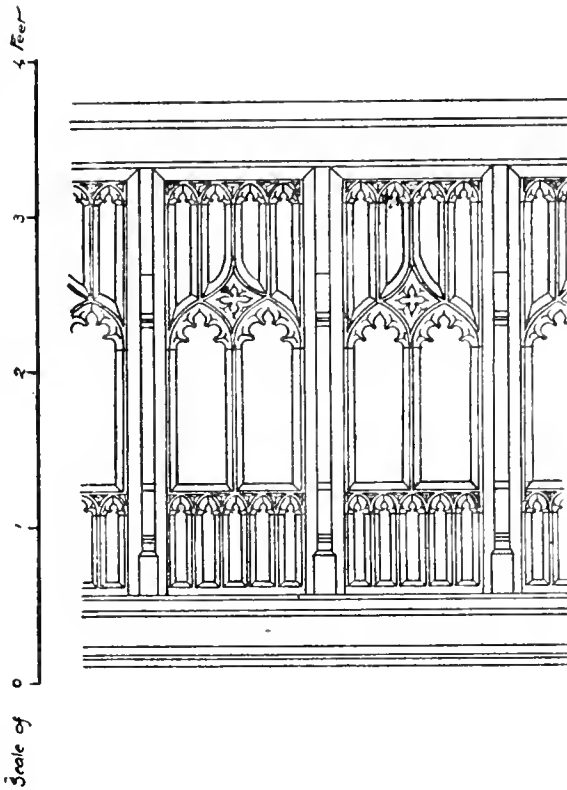


FIG. 67

been designed by the architect on lines similar to that of Partrishow. At Llanegryn, Merionethshire, the east side of the loft is a beautiful piece of work (Plate XXXIV). By the kindness of Mr. Fletcher Moss, the author of "Pilgrimages to Old Homes" (Series IV), who has allowed us to use his block, we are able to illustrate this magnificent example.<sup>1</sup> The panels are here all different and the designs show great skill and imagination. The variation gives a great richness of effect. Parallel instances may be found in Brittany in the lofts of the chapels of Sainte Barbe (le Faouet) and Saint Fiacre (Plate XXA), where the fretwork is most elaborate.

Next in order of elaboration come those lofts which, beneath richly-carved canopied heads, contain panels of varying size for the reception of figures, either painted, or carved. In many, perhaps in most, English instances, particularly in the West Country, it is thought that paintings predominated.<sup>2</sup> We have in the loft surviving at Atherington, N. Devon, an instance of this arrangement (Plates XXXVB and LXXV). Here the original paintings have been obliterated, and others of Elizabethan date—heraldry and inscriptions—substituted, but there can be little doubt that this front was originally furnished, like that of Exeter Cathedral, with sacred paintings, although the projecting canopies are suggestive of a bolder treatment.

It is stated by an old parishioner in Marwood (N. Devon) that the fine gallery of the loft, which was removed in the middle of the nineteenth century, contained statuettes. This is quite probable, as there must have been many of a type designed for their accommodation, throughout the country. The roodloft at Kenton, reconstructed from old fragments, exhibits a series of flat broad panels, probably designed for paintings, though possibly for bas-reliefs (Plate XXXVA).

The tabernacle work in the canopies above is of the richest and most delicate description (*vide* illustration, Plate XXXVI), and glowing with rich old colour and deep bronze-shaded gold.

Turning to other parts of the country, we find the grand loft at Flamborough, Yorks (Plate XXXIXB), suggestive of a similar treatment—and here it would seem certain that statuary occupied the niches. This work also retains some of its ancient colour and gold decoration.

In the case of some of the Welsh roodlofts there would appear to have been an abundance of statuary. At Llanegryn, the west front of the loft (Plate XXVIB) consists of a series of large tracery-headed panels alternating with small niches, duplicated in the height, *i.e.*, one being placed vertically over the other. At Llananno (Plate CXXXIA) there was a continuous series of carved figures, which has been restored in recent years with great success. This may be compared to the arrangement of some of the lofts in Brittany, notably those of Lambader, La Roche, or Kerfons. That of Priziac (Morbihan) (Plate XXB) is a curious and late instance in which the corrupt taste of the period gave birth to a degraded and semi-Pagan symbolism. Here, on the east side of the loft,

<sup>1</sup> The old roodloft of St. Columb Minor is believed to have been of this nature.

<sup>2</sup> At St. Michael's Mount, the panels of the loft bore the symbols of the Passion.



are seen figures of the saints in the old manner, bearing their symbols, but interspersed alternately with these are representations of Bacchantes and other creatures of Pagan mythology.

The west side of this loft, which we also illustrate (Plate XXB), provides an instance of the bas-relief treatment, which may very probably have had counterparts in this country. Here nine incidents in the life of St. Nicholas are portrayed, of which a portion are shown in the photograph.

The perfect little roodloft at Avebury, Wilts (Plate XLII B), has a series of canopied niches with open backs. Doubtless these once held statuettes. There is much original gold and colour on this loft, which has been well restored. The screen beneath it is, however, modern excepting the tracery heads.

It will thus be seen that the arrangement and detail of these lofts was exceedingly varied, and there seems to have been no rule as to their treatment. Here and there we find in old parish accounts, entries given showing the character of these lofts, as at Yatton, Somerset (*vide* Somerset section). It was probably a question of money, whether the loft was plain or rich, and in many cases, special bequests were made by private individuals. The examples above mentioned embrace the best and most perfect examples of ancient lofts surviving in this country.

Of modern lofts there are now several erected which reproduce the old character, but most of these are far less costly and elaborate than the old, particularly in regard to sculpture, which is missing in most cases, and in others very sparingly applied.

The loft at Lew Trenchard (Plate XLA), with its series of painted panels, is a revival of the old type of Devonshire loft, described by Rev. S. Baring-Gould as the "Poor Man's Bible." It furnishes a series of pictorial tableaux representing scenes from Our Lord's Life and Passion, and between these are narrower divisions with paintings of saints of local repute. The roodloft at Kenton has within recent years been enriched by the addition of figures of angels carved in semi-relief, filling the compartments beneath the projecting canopies. This treatment, though not the ideal one, has added greatly to the interest and beauty of the general effect.

---

## THE TYMPANUM OF THE SCREEN

§ 45. We have mentioned the fact that in some cases the upper rail of the roodloft balcony itself furnished the necessary support for the rood and its attendant images. In many churches of limited height the screen and roodloft would together attain so large an elevation as to leave little room for an independent rood-beam. Sockets, apparently for figures, are visible in some cases in the upper face of these rails, which also carried a row of basins and prickets for tapers. Such sockets are described at Llanrwst upon the eastern balcony rail, and taper-holders are mentioned as surviving until recent times at Maidstone.

Over this rail, on the eastward side of the loft, would formerly have been seen a partition of close boarding or plaster work enclosing the whole space over the loft up to the crown of the chancel arch, or to the roof of the church, as the case might be.

Sometimes the chancel-opening was low, so that there was a complete and solid stone wall above the roodloft, as at Patricio, Llanfilo, and other Welsh examples, at Avebury, Wilts (Plate XLII B), at St. Margaret's, or at Little Hereford, where the wall was recessed for a rood altar; at Tickenham, Somerset, where it was pierced by a small hagioscope, or at Capel-le-Ferne and Sandridge, where larger openings were provided.<sup>1</sup>

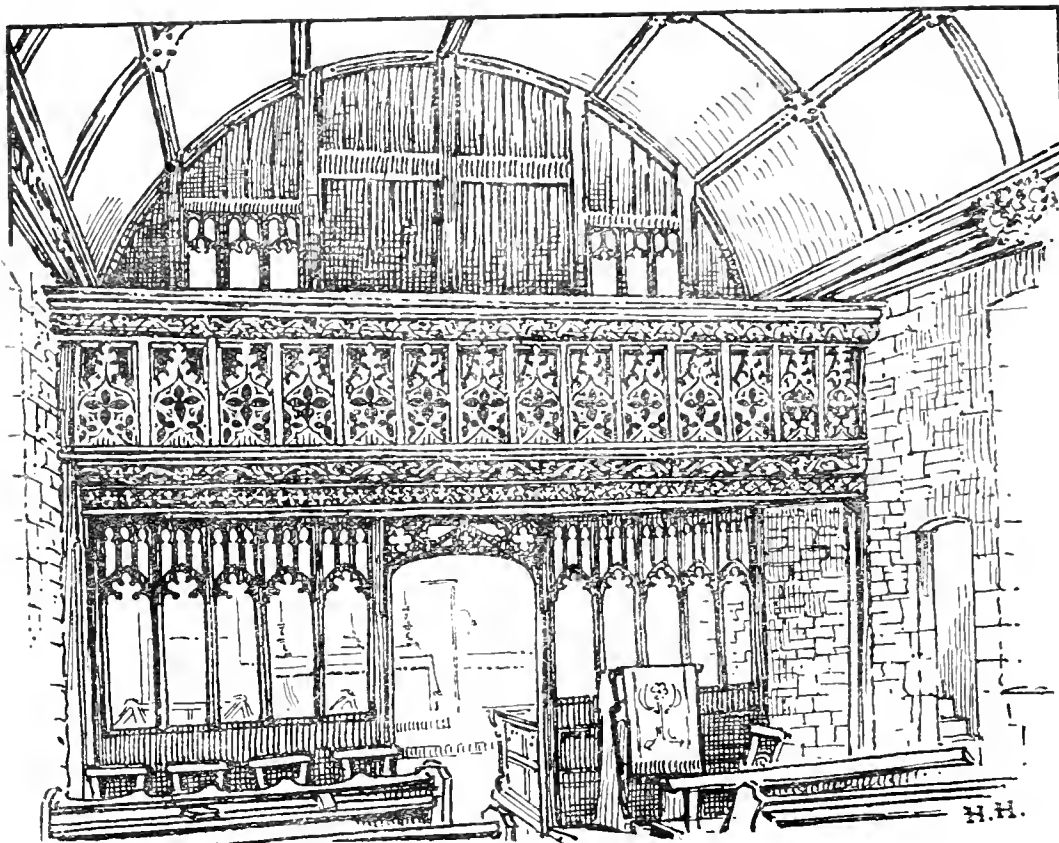


FIG. 68

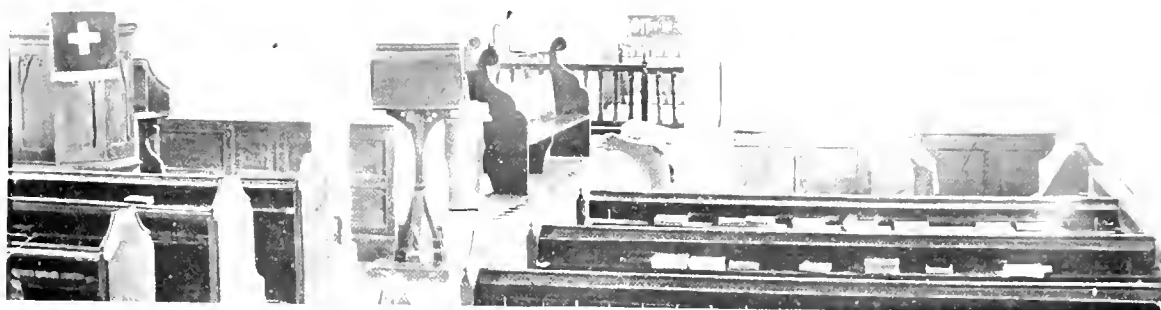
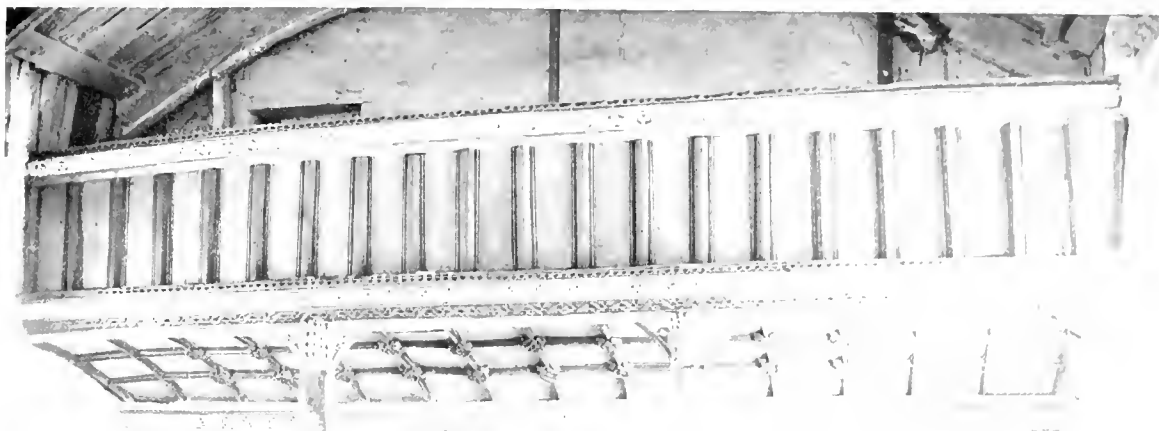
But of the boarded partition or tympanum there remain sufficient examples and records or traces of former ones to show that the arrangement was of common occurrence in all parts of England and Wales.

It was usually of close boarding, sometimes perforated with small lights or hagioscopes, as at Llanelieu (Plate XLII A) or Bettws Newydd<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 68), but more usually appears to

<sup>1</sup> At St. John's, Glastonbury, a rather large hagioscope has just been exposed over the chancel-arch, accessible from the former roodloft. At Godmanchester are two single-light openings in this position.

<sup>2</sup> The openings at Llanelieu are small perforations, irregularly placed: but Bettws Newydd has two regular three-light traceried openings.

PLATE XXX



(A) ROODLOFT, ST. MARGARET'S, HERTFORDSHIRE



(B) ROODLOFT, LEANFELD, BRICKNOCK



have been completely closed in, and so placed as to allow space on the top of the rail for the carved rood and figures to stand in relief against it. These figures were generally not carved all round, but were in about three-quarter relief; their backs being secured by rivets or pegs to the boarding of the tympanum which formed a background of striking character, as it was usually painted with a "Doom" or representation of the Last Judgment. In the illustrations we give of the Wenhaston and Dauntsey tympana, the position of the rood and figures, where they were attached to the boarding, will be clearly seen.

Perhaps the best known instance of this feature is the example from Wenhaston, Suffolk (Plate XLIIIB), discovered a little over twenty years ago, and now preserved in the church. It had been coated with whitewash, and the existence of the paintings only became known after removal and exposure to rain. It is well described by C. E. Keyser, F.S.A. ("Archæologia," liv), and a fine coloured reproduction is there given.

The Dauntsey tympanum, sketched by the present writer, has been described in the *Journal of the R.I.B.A.*, Vol. XII, No. 20 (1905), and we here reproduce the drawing by the permission of the Editor (Plate XLIIIA). One panel is lost. The general scheme is rather different from that at Wenhaston. The souls of the dead are seen beneath the earth in their shrouds, the godly souls rise by a steep path to the gates of the Heavenly City, where, as at Wenhaston, St. Peter receives them. On the other side the fate of the wicked is very graphically portrayed, and much space is devoted to this ghastly subject, to which the debased symbolism of later mediæval times gave prominence.

Our Lord, upon the rainbow, with SS. Mary and John interceding for sinners, appear, as at Wenhaston, and we also note the darkened sun and the blood-red moon, the flying angels with their trumps summoning humanity to the bar of the Eternal.

From the nave this display of imagery, with the symbolic background richly coloured, must have furnished a striking object lesson to the simple rustics who were congregated there. The worship of their fathers, impregnated with mystic tradition, conveyed to eye and ear, through symbolism of form and ritual, the great inevitable things of life and death, the relation of man to his God, and here in the chancel screen the worshipper was taught to see the image of that stern barrier which parts the pilgrim of earth from his eternal abode. Ranged all along below, and again above the veil, Apostles, Prophets, Virgins, Martyrs, Saints and Sibyls stood lifting their faces in triumph and encouragement to the believer. The snares of Death and Hell lay about his pathway in the shape of hideous fiend and dragon, a warning to the hardened and impenitent, but above, the great rood and the galaxy of glorified images spoke of the triumph of the Divine scheme of Redemption, and reminded him who passed beneath of Our Lord's conquest of death, and of the promise of the final overthrow of the powers of darkness.

In forming a mental picture of the old-time chancel barrier with all its splendour of statuary and tabernacle work, not the least impressive factor would be the richly-painted Tympanum, whose shadowed depths, half-revealed by the light of the twinkling lamps and tapers, would add a mysterious suggestiveness and sombre dignity to the whole, and

serve to accentuate the brilliancy of the ornaments, gleaming with gold and colour, which stood before it.

§ 46. The Tympanum may be regarded as a substitute in more permanent form for the outer veil which, once more to quote Durandus, it was customary to interpose between the people and the clergy. It takes the place of the chancel wall, or mural screen, in those churches which had been opened up when the fashion of providing chancel arches of large dimensions came in. In later churches we find the chancel arches sometimes prepared for the reception of a tympanic framework, by the substitution of a plain rebate for the usual mouldings.

The custom of erecting these solid "Tympana" over the screens persisted in a remarkable manner all through the Reformation period, and subsequently, down to modern times, whilst there is sufficient evidence that its old symbolic meaning was not lost sight of—nay, rather, it was accentuated by the increased appreciation of Old Testament teaching and imagery which characterised the Reformation era. Sometimes, in place of a boarded tympanum or in addition thereto, there was placed behind the great rood in the old days a hanging of some rich material.

Thus we find that in Post Reformation days these "tympana" were constructed, and were sometimes painted with representations of veils or curtains.

At Rose Ash, North Devon, before the recent "restoration," there was such a tympanum over the chancel screen, bearing a painted eye, symbolic of the Divine Omniscience, piercing through a drapery of festooned red curtains—the old "amphithura" or parted veil—whilst a curious example still survives at Lockington (Leicestershire) (Fig. 72), where the parted veils are looped aside to give room for a symbol of human sovereignty—the arms of Queen Anne. (See Post-Reformation section, p. 110.)

As illustrating the way in which the thought of the seventeenth century was penetrated by the ancient symbology, we may quote the following from a description of Holyrood Chapel by Father Hay, a chaplain of James II.:

"This splendid temple was divided into three parts—the sanctuary, approached by steps, and in its centre the Holy Table—the choir, appropriated to the clergy, with a pulpit from which the Epistles and Gospels were wont to be read, and the *narthex or nave*, in which was the defined place of prayer for the people.

"A middle, or ornamental door, separated choir from nave. The people, apart from the clergy, joined in the divine mysteries through open lattice work," etc.

§ 47. It has been shown that the choirs of our churches have, since the sixth century or thereabouts, been included within a mural screen, and we have traced this under the several forms of chancel wall, chancel arch, triple arcade, stone fenestration, stone or wood cancelli, and tympanic partition. This is the first veil in its manifold forms, many of them being in use concurrently.

Where then shall we look for the second veil—that which according to our national

liturgical practice would have extended between the clerics or choir, and the celebrant priests at the altar?

At Brixworth or Peterchurch we have seen it as an inner archway, before which a veil was hung—but with the development of the symmetric rectangular chancel of our parish churches, no structural feature is any longer observable at this point, and the delimitation of choir and sanctuary becomes a purely internal one. It appears to have taken the form of a beam, or light screen, across the chancel, just at the point where our modern usage prescribes the Communion rails—and here it was that in pre-Reformation days the “Lenten Veil”—the second veil—was suspended.

In many churches we may still observe the corbels half-way down the chancel, on north and south sides, where the beam originally ran. In others hooks are still visible. The larger churches had regular “cancelli” at this point, such as are still seen at Saint David’s, but from all available evidence it would seem that in the smaller a beam only was usual, though this beam seems occasionally to have supported a narrow loft, which may have been used as an iconostasis of secondary nature, or as a reliquary.

It was probably also a support for tapers, like the roodloft, and in this capacity would have been a rather important feature, in regard to the propinquity of the altar.

In the churches of Brilley and Michaelchurch, in Herefordshire, the whole sanctuary was canopied over, the ceiling or tester being supported by a beam upon posts over the step marking the choir limit.

At Easting and Postling, Kent, are evidences of a beam at this point, and at the latter church are traces of a narrow loft which formerly ran across the sanctuary. This was supported upon two beams, but it is believed there was no screen below. The roodscreen, of course, traversed the church in the usual position.

## SECTION IV

### POST-REFORMATION SCREENWORK

---

§ 48. FROM the foregoing description of the uses of the roodloft in the English parish churches, it will be seen that these may be conveniently summarised under certain heads, as follows :

(1) As a jubé or pulpitum—for the delivery of homilies or exhortations, the reading of the Epistle and Gospel, and other lections, also for the singing of psalms, etc. This was the earlier use, before the provision of pulpits on the floor of the church—the musical uses becoming gradually more and more emphasized to the final exclusion of the older customs and the creation of a regular minstrels' gallery.

(2) As an iconostasis—for the support of the rood and attendant images, with their occasional background, the painted "Doom" ; for hanging-lamps and candles, the loft itself supporting altars (more frequently in the earlier examples), either in honour of the Holy Rood, or of some saint—and perhaps a Golgotha at the foot of the cross. The loft would also be employed for the exposition of the sacred elements, for the ritual veiling and unveiling of the figures, for their decoration with boughs and garlands on festal days, and for the maintenance of the rood-lights. Upon the front were displayed pictures of a sacred or legendary character, together with minor statuary of figure paintings and religious emblems and heraldry.

As an iconostasis, the roodloft was condemned at the Reformation, the uses above-mentioned being abolished on the ground of their superstitious nature. Certain paintings were nevertheless allowed occasionally to remain for the edification of worshippers. These include the figures upon the lower panels of the screens which are very frequently those of Apostles and Prophets ; whilst here and there the great painting of the "Doom" or Last Judgment which was over the screen, was maintained until covered by the Jacobean tablets of the Law. In the once fine painting preserved at Gloucester Cathedral (Fig. 69) we have what appears to be indubitably a Post-Reformation work. The reasons for this opinion are given in Mr. Scharf's valuable monograph in the *Archaeologia* for 1854. In this instance the panel was upon the face of the screen.

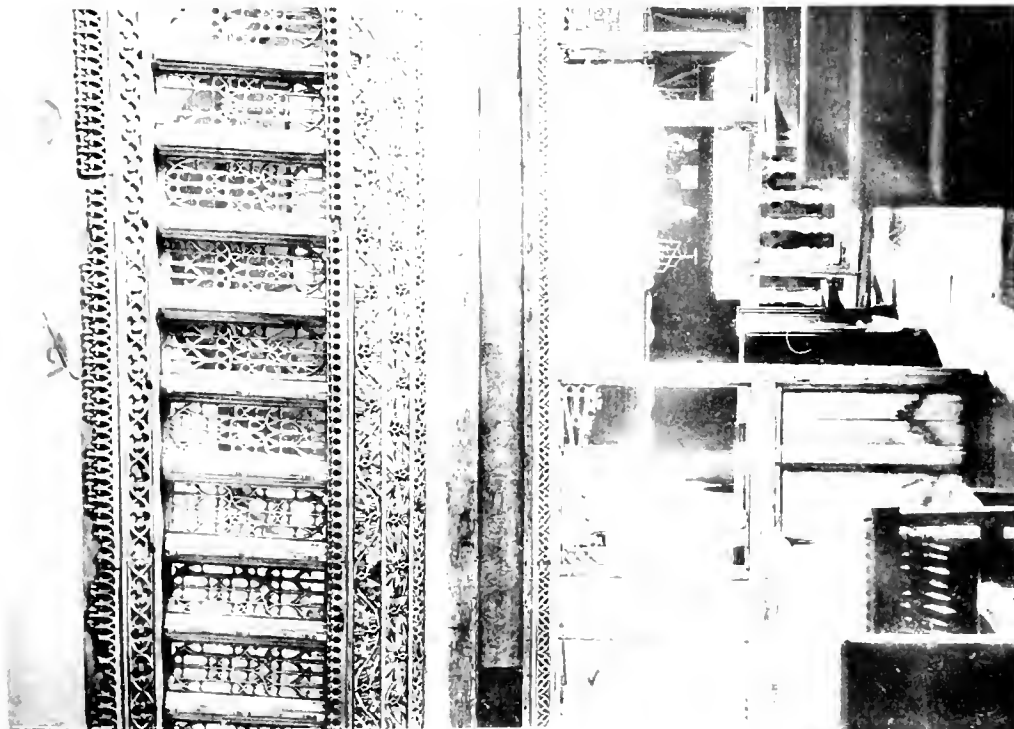
Instances are recorded of the setting-up of paintings of prophets or evangelists upon the screens subsequently to the Reformation,<sup>1</sup> and the figures of Moses and Aaron were quite commonly fixed over the screen, with the tables of the Law.

<sup>1</sup> This is recorded of the choir screen of Bristol Cathedral, p. 102 *note*.

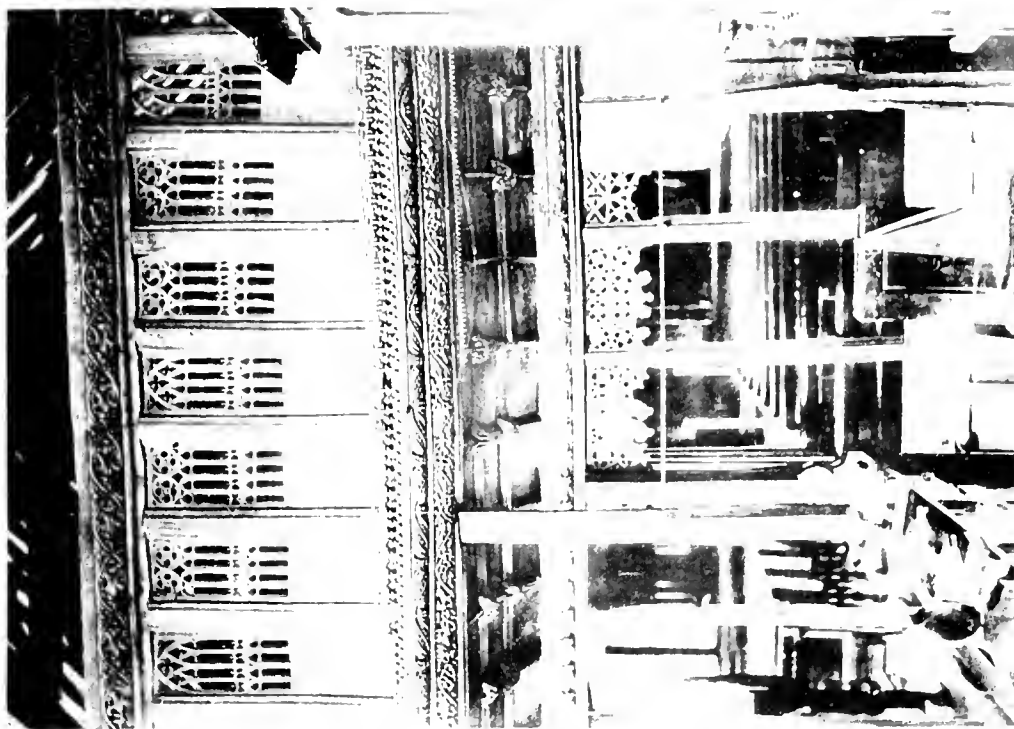


# PLATE XXXI

ROOD-LOFTS WITH TRACERIED PANELS



(A) PATRICIO



(B) LLANWNNOG



As a pulpit, the roodloft has never, so far as we are aware, been specifically condemned, but this manner of employing it had fallen into abeyance with the introduction of the pulpit on the floor of the church, so that the Reformation brought little change in this respect, and the use of the loft as a pulpit survives only as a faint tradition, and in very rare instances.

From the comparatively large number of Jacobean or Carolean pulpits in our churches it might doubtless be argued that in the Elizabethan era, at all events, there was still a scarcity of this particular piece of furniture. Later we shall adduce other arguments tending to show that the loft may still have been in use at that period for like purposes.

But it is chiefly for the purpose of a singers' and minstrels' gallery, with seats and desks for the choristers, and space for the organ, that we believe the lofts were retained.

This use was certainly permitted to continue at the Reformation, in spite of the orders for the taking down of the roodlofts, and survived in many of our country churches until the Victorian era.<sup>1</sup>

#### NOTE ON GALLERIES

<sup>1</sup> The use of galleries in our churches before the Reformation is evidenced by records dating in some cases from the close of the fifteenth century. These speak of "lofts" containing pews, but it need not be generally assumed that so sacred a place as the roodloft was necessarily invaded by pew-renting parishioners. That there were other lofts we know, and there are numerous instances of such pre-Reformation lofts at the west end of the churches.

The following extracts from MS. records preserved in the Vestries of Bristol parishes are given us by Mr. Cuthbert Atchley. They tend to show that the proprietary pew was a well-established feature of the churches of this late period.

From the "Rescyte of Setys [seats] of St. Nicholas, Bristol.. 1520."

"Itm. of Griffyth Barbor, of remevyng down fro the lofte .. .. viiijd."

[Three similar entries follow]

"Itm. of John Andrewys for hys pew in ye lofte .. .. xiid."

A further item gives the charge for seats in the body of the church at 20d. In the same MS. for 1524 occurs the following:

"Itm. of John Pille for changing of his sete owte of the lofte in-to the church .. .. viiijd."

In the pew receipts of Christ Church with St. Ewen, Bristol, for 1534 occur a large number of items.

"ffor the in-largen of the lofte in the churche and the new pewyes all-so there made."

The custom of placing young people in the loft, which was traditional in the Victorian era, finds its pre-Reformation counterpart in the following extract from the parish accounts of St. Andrew Hubbard. 1499-1502.

"Itm. paid ffor a pew makyng in the loft for the maydens .. .. viiijd."

*Brit. Mag.* 1848, p. 577.

But it certainly comes as a shock to find evidence of the invasion of the roodloft itself by pews at this date. That a place set apart for uses so sacred could thus be employed seems to point to a great degeneracy of custom and a loss of the older ideals of reverence in the worship of the period.

Nevertheless we have one indubitable instance of this in the same accounts, for 1511-12.

"Itm. paid for the makyng of the pewys in the rode-lofte .. .. vjs. viiijd."

The frequent occurrence of pews over the chancel screens in notes of earlier nineteenth century restorations would tend to suggest, in the light of the above extract, that this custom may, here and there, have been continuous from the late pre-Reformation times.

11th canon of Council of Exeter, 1287, under Peter Quivel, Bp. Exon., concludes: "Also we have heard that parishioners often quarrel concerning the seats in church, two or more of them claiming the same seat, whence great scandal arises, and divine service is often hindered; we therefore enact that no person in future shall be allowed to claim any seat as his own, the nobility and patrons of churches being alone excepted, but he who first comes to church to pray shall choose his own place for prayer."

§ 49. Before considering this important point in detail, let us for the sake of chronological exactness, view the changes brought about by the Reformation in their proper sequence, as affecting the subject of this essay.

The great step taken in King Henry VIII's reign, which heralded the Reformation, was the suppression of the monasteries, and this resulted in the speedy dismantling of many noble churches which were either pulled down, left to decay, or secularised. In

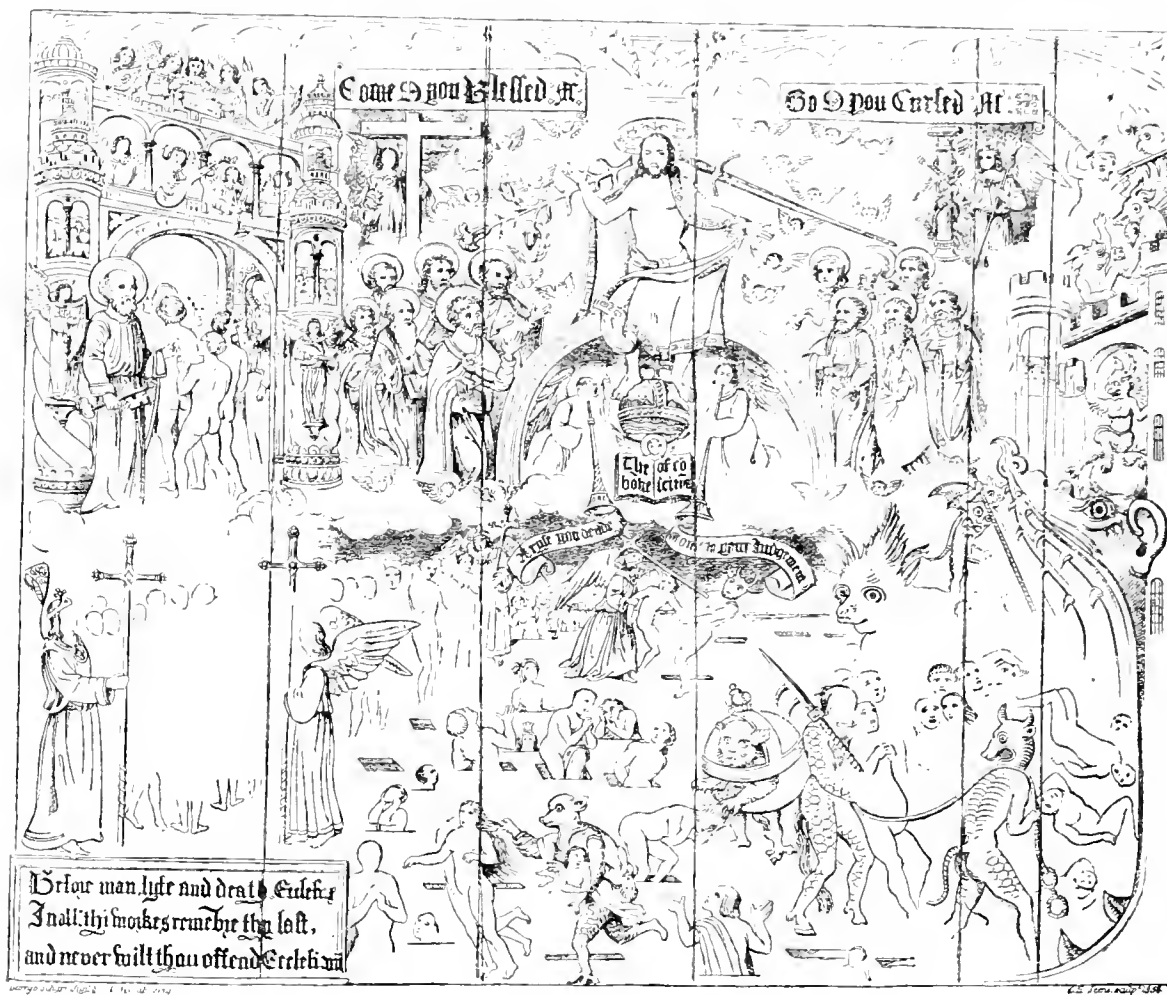


FIG. 69

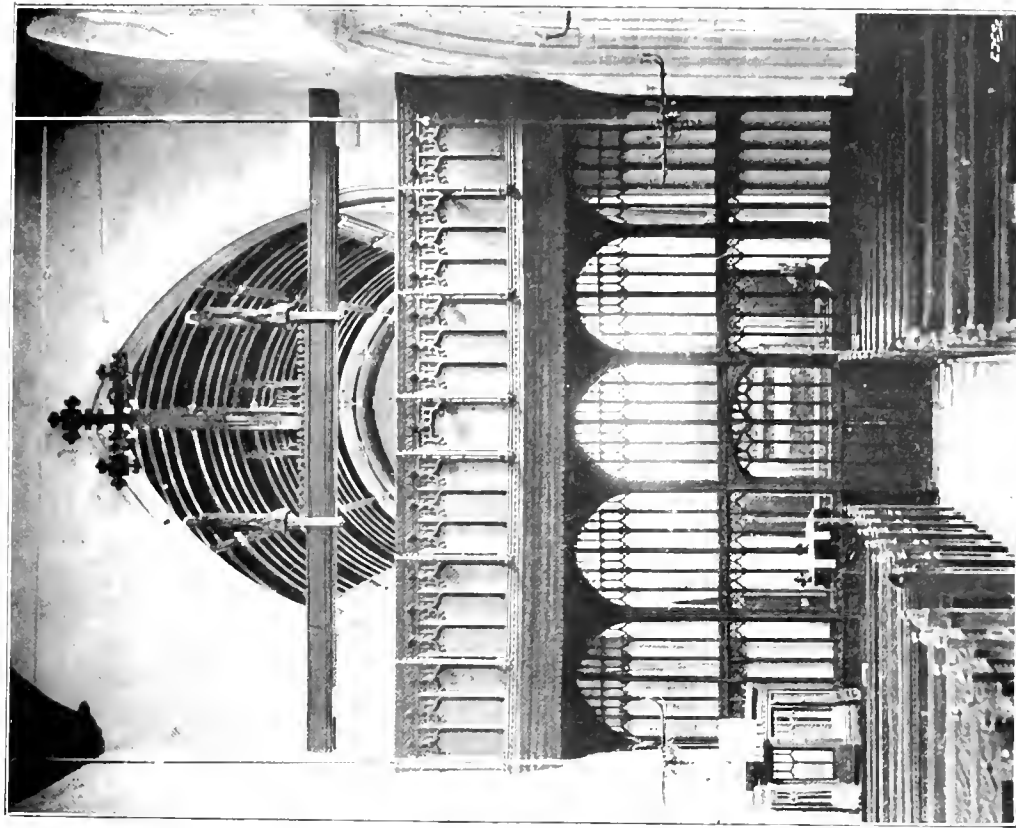
consequence of this, a great deal of the heavier and less intrinsically costly furniture (such as carved oak screenwork), which had graced the monastic churches, was removed by pious hands and reinstated in the parish churches. Thus we find quite a number of cases in which the chancel screen of the parish church is reputed to have come from some neighbouring abbey or priory at the Dissolution: and although tradition doubtless does not always speak correctly, there is probably truth underlying a number of these reports, although it would occasionally appear that the origin of this idea is to be found in the

# PLATE XXXII

## ROODLOFTS



(A) XVI CENTURY ROODLOFT, HUDDERSFIELD, YORKS.



(B) XV CENTURY ROODLOFT (RECONSTRUCTED), MIDDLEWICH.



fact that much of the fine carving was done prior to the fifteenth century by artists attached to the monasteries, as *Conversi* or *Lay Brethren*.<sup>1</sup>

At Aysgarth the screen of exquisite workmanship is said to have been brought from Jervaulx Abbey, and its position in the church lends colour to the legend. Llanrwst screen, with its roodloft, and the beautiful screen and stallwork at Montgomery (Plate XLIVB), are the subjects of a similar report; Richmond Church has the stalls and canopies from Easby Abbey, and many similar instances might be cited. Many churches possess screens which obviously do not belong to them. This often enough was the result of vandalism on the part of churchwardens in a neighbouring parish, and a laudable wish to save beautiful work which has been rejected by its unappreciative owners. But others again, have not the appearance of foodscreens proper, either in scale or proportions, and these may well have been rescued from the dilapidations of a neighbouring Abbey.<sup>2</sup>

§ 50. Until the year 1547, which was the critical year for our parish churches, no great change took place in their interiors. The burning of lights before images had been forbidden by a decree of 1538, which ordained that "only that light that commonly goeth about the crosse of the church by the roodloft, the light before the Sacrament of the Altar, and the light about the sepulchre," should be suffered to remain: and in 1547 all lights were forbidden, save two upon the altar, before the Sacrament, "which," say the King's injunctions, "for the signification 'that Christ is the very true Light of the World,' they shall suffer to remain still." By the same decree, all images which had been abused by pilgrimage or idolatrous worship and offerings were to be destroyed, and all pictures or other representations of feigned miracles, obliterated. Shortly afterwards a further decree was issued by the King, that all images, without exception, should be removed and taken away.

Accordingly we find that there ensued a general demolition of roods and images. On September 5th, 1547, according to the Chronicle of Grey Friars, the images at St. Paul's were removed at the commencement of the King's visitation, those at St. Bride's and other churches following: "and so alle images pullyd downe thorow alle Ynglonde att that tyme, and alle churches new whyte-lymed, with the Commandments written on the walles."

The royal arms, with their supporters, the lion and Tudor greyhound, now first made their appearance in a conspicuous position in the churches.

The great rood at St. Paul's, with the images of St. Mary and St. John, were removed on November 17th, by night, and at the same time all roods and attendant images remaining in the parish churches were pulled down and sermons delivered against them.

The removal of images in Edward VI's reign may have been the cause, incidentally, of the destruction of some of the carved frontals of the roodlofts, but these were not yet themselves condemned.

There are records of the erection of numerous new screens and roodlofts in the later years of Henry VIII's reign. In the West Country, especially, many fine specimens of screenwork still survive which may be referred to dates between 1530 and 1547.

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, the screen of Abbotskerswell Church, Devon, said to have been the handiwork of the monks of Sherborne.

<sup>2</sup> See note on ALFORD, *Somerset*.

The noble choir screen which once adorned the Cathedral Church of Bristol was the gift of a citizen, Thomas White, whose will is dated 1542, and was erected between 1543 and 1547. It bore upon its front a series of statues in finely-carved tabernacles, the arms of King Henry and Prince Edward's badge being placed within the spandrels of the great doorway.<sup>1</sup>

So late as 1546 we find in the churchwardens' accounts for Bletchingley the following :  
 " Item : for setting up the Rood lofte.. .. . Xd.  
           nayles for the same .. .. . ijd.  
           for mending of the organs .. .. . ijsiiijd."  
 Also " for paynting the qwyer and the Rood loft, the King's Arms, the outer  
           aisle adjoining the qwyer, etc. .. .. . VI℥ XVs. ijd."

Later in the same year, and following the Archdeacon's visitation, this entry occurs—  
 " Item : Paid to the labourers for pulling down the Rood .. .. . Xiiijd."

Later yet, in 1550, there is an entry in the Ashburton parish accounts referring to the repair of the Roodloft, and in the accounts for St. Martin's Parish, Leicester, for 1551 (5th Edward VI) the following occurs :

" Paid for painting the Rood loft .. .. . 40s."

The removal of the ornaments from the roodloft was accompanied in some cases by the painting of the Scriptures on the loft, but in others the alternative course was adopted of covering the surface with a cloth. Thus we find in one case a charge for " XXV ells of cloth for the frunte of the roodloft whereon the Commandments were written," and at Smarden, Kent, a cloth to hang before the roodloft to deface the monuments, vj tabernacles that wer yn the same roode lofte written with scriptur and the Kynges Armes sett yn the mydst of the same cloth."

Wandsworth parish accounts supply us with an instance of the removal of a roodloft in 1552, the year which witnessed the publication of the Second Liturgy of Edward VI, viz.:

6 Edward VI. " Paid for pulling down of the Rowde lofte and setting up  
           of the scriptures, that is to say, the creacion of the worlde, the coming  
           of our Saviour Xt, the Beatytudes, the X Commandments, the  
           XXI articles of our belief, and the Lord's Prayer, the Judgement of  
           the World, the Kinge's Majestie's Arms .. .. . iij℥ xijs. vjd."

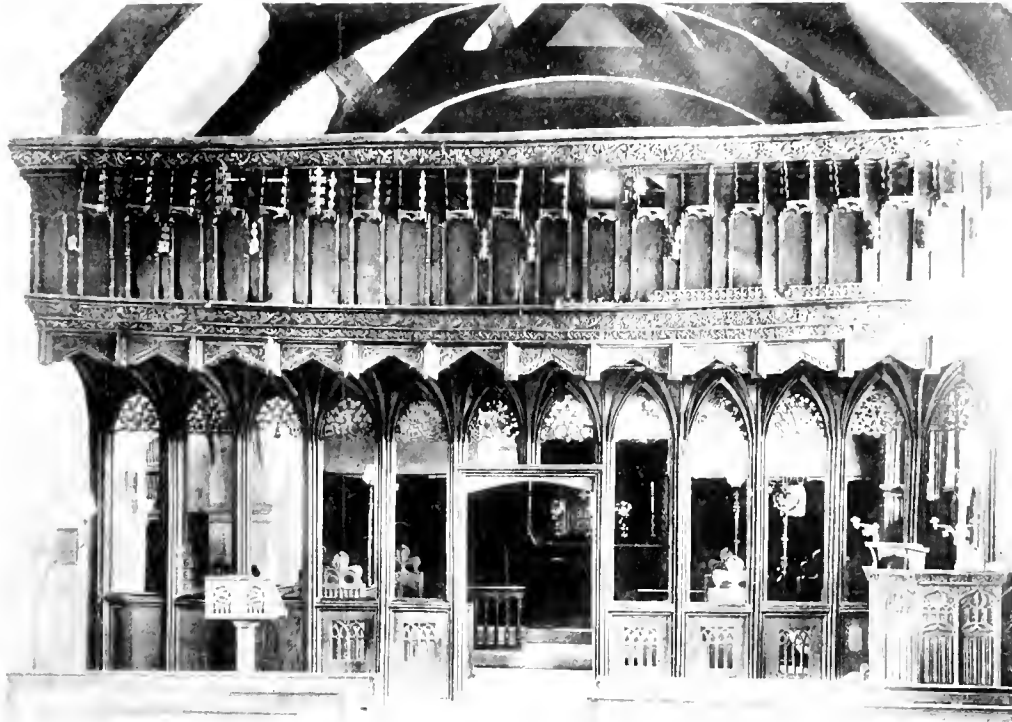
The latter years of this King's reign witnessed the pillage and confiscation of the more valuable contents of the parish churches, but the chief visible changes consisted in the removal of the images, frescoes, and altars, with their reredoses and sculptured histories.

<sup>1</sup> This beautiful work, being a source of pride to the citizens of Bristol, we can understand how loth they would have been to have it mutilated, and their unwillingness to comply with the rule calling for the removal of its ornaments is evidenced in the letter written by Elizabeth's Commissioners in December, 1561, to the Dean and Chapter, wherein the continued existence of these tabernacles is complained of (see Bloxam, *Companion*, p. 110, footnote). After the removal of the tabernacles and images had been effected, paintings of the twelve minor prophets were inserted in their stead. The royal arms and badge above referred to are still preserved, and have been incorporated with other fragments in the newly-constructed side screens to the choir. The fine and deeply-moulded arched head of the great doorway was to be seen until a few years ago in the cathedral grounds, where it was preserved, but has recently disappeared, having (so the writer is informed) been sawn up by order of one of the cathedral clergy to provide stone for some other purpose.

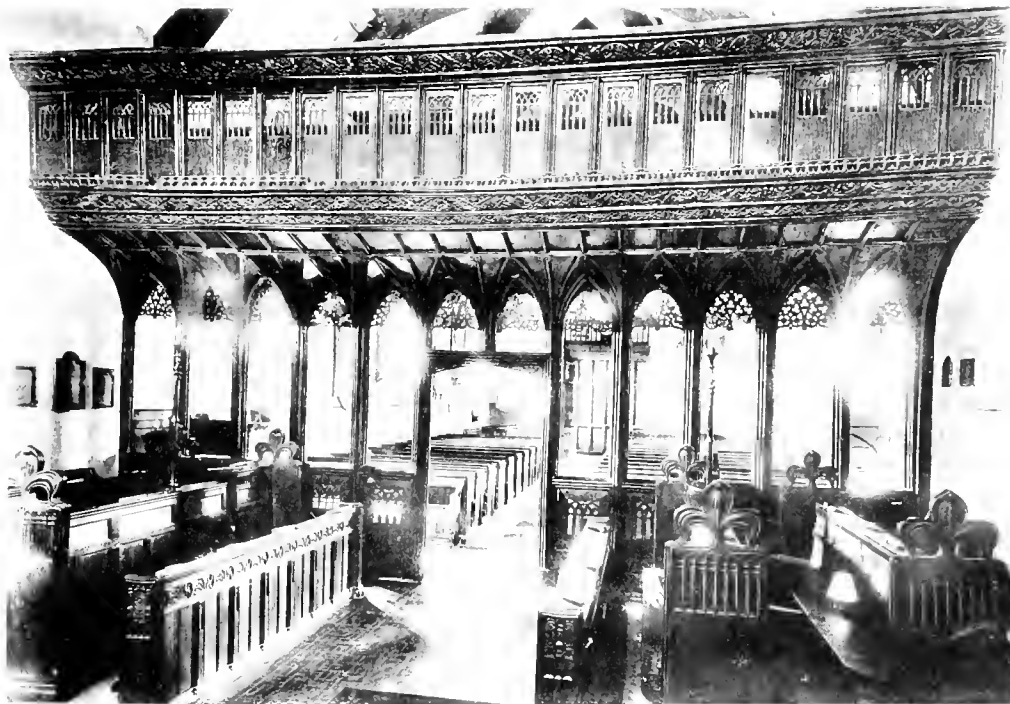


PLATE XXXIII

THE ROODSCREEN AND LOFT LLANKWST DENBIGHSHIRE



(A) WEST SIDE



(B) EAST SIDE



This spoiling of the churches must have been a terrible blow to the people who were still at one with their church. In these days of freedom, when a man's life and his home are inviolate, and the standard of domestic comfort is raised ; when a self-reliant individualism has taken the place of child-like dependence—when too there is so universal a diffusion of popular art and education, and means of recreation or entertainment are provided for the people on all hands—it is difficult to realise how much the parish church, with its beautiful and stately adjuncts, and impressive services and symbolism meant to the humble villager or townsman of those days.

Having nothing in his rude home save the simplest necessities of life, all his instincts and cravings for the sublime or the beautiful would seek and would find nutriment in his church. In the stress of a rough life, it would be there that he would go for peace of mind and for strengthening of spirit. Feeling himself the child of a community in close family relation with his fellow-parishioners, he would be sensible of a personal share and interest in the building which was at once the focus of his social and of his religious life, the fount which vitalised his dawning sensibilities, and the mould which gave them concrete expression—a retreat within the shadow of whose symbolic and mysterious beauty he would for awhile find redemption from the sordid and the commonplace, and a sanctuary from the violence of turbulent times.

§ 51. The accession of Queen Mary, in 1553, was immediately followed by an attempt to restore the ancient features of our churches to the state in which they were before 1547, and evidence is plentiful of the zeal with which this intention was carried into effect.

New roods and images were carved and set up to replace those destroyed. To give two instances only, at Minchinhampton, and at St. Helen's, Abingdon, roods were re-erected within a year or so of the Queen's accession. It is stated by an old writer that "the carvers and makers of statues had a quick trade in roods and other images that were to be set up in churches." "Everything," says Pugin, "was done to remove the objectionable things that had been introduced during Edward's reign. The texts of Scripture that had been placed on the screens and walls were washed out, and in one instance the cloth painted with the Commandments which had hung before the screen was taken down and cut into surplices."

In 1554 we find in the records of Ashburton parish, the entry :

"Strykynge oute of the Scriptor upon the Rode Lofte . . . . . vjd."

And we may easily infer the nature of that which took its place. So strongly did the West-Country people cling to their ancient faith and ritual, that the changes in Edward's reign had contributed largely to the rising which took place in 1549. The reaction in 1554 must have been most welcome to them.

In Bishop Bonner's visitation articles of 1554, we find Article IX : "Item : Whether there be a crucifix, a roodloft, as in times past hath been accustomed," and in the Articles of Cardinal Pole's Visitation in 1557 :

"Whether they have a rood in their church of a decent stature, with Mary and John and an image of the patron of the same church."

The churches were inspected by Dr. Story, to ascertain that each one had "the rood-lofts supplied, the crucifixes to be plac't with the images of Our B. Lady and St. John, the one on the right hand, and the other on the left, and the King's Arms with a lion on the one side, and a dragon on the other side, to be removed from the altar, and to be set in a place more convenient."

The royal arms were, as may well be understood, peculiarly obnoxious to Catholic instincts, and to see them placed over the altar must have appeared the direst profanity. Dr. Martin, in conversation with Archbishop Cranmer in 1556, speaks of the order for these as "Doune with the arms of Christ, and up with a lion and a dog."

Other instances given by Bloxam show the bitterness with which this emblem of the State usurpation of ecclesiastical headship was regarded.<sup>1</sup>

§ 52. The natural reaction from the religious persecutions which disfigured Mary's reign, and the return of numerous exiles from abroad, infected with a militant Calvinism, created a force potent for change, destined to find expression in Elizabeth's reign, but this time through a changed temper and habit of the people themselves rather than through State interference. Protestantism began to be firmly bitten into English life, and innovations hostile to the old order of things became more spontaneous, and were less unwillingly accepted. Elizabeth in her first year set to work to re-establish the order of things as it existed in the second year of Edward VI, and thus preserve the continuity of the Church, but the Puritan or Calvinist faction tried hard to develop a presbyterian system within the Church, and a spirit of disaffection was developed, fostered by unordained men, the pioneers of the political dissenters of later days.

The Queen was actuated by much real reverence for the fabric and ornaments of the churches, as her decree of 1560 bears witness. She had a horror of sacrilege. But almost simultaneously with the commencement of her reign we find these objects deemed superstitious, such as roods and images, which had been erected in Mary's reign, were once more to be destroyed. In St. Margaret's, Westminster, the rood was removed in 1559, but the roodloft, which had been built at great expense in 1519, was allowed to remain in its original place until the following year, when it was reformed. Its "new reforming" was a considerable charge to the parish. The work was accomplished in 1560, and was accompanied by charges for "new organs in the Pulpitte."

"In this year," says Henry Machyn, "those parishes which had been backward in removing the relics of idolatry were now compelled to do so." Stone altars were removed and tables of carved wood substituted. In this year also ("the ij yere of Queen Elizabeth") "was alle the rood loftes taken down in London, and wryghtynges written in the same place."

At St. Dunstan's-in-the-East the parishioners and churchwardens received from the Archbishop a letter concerning the pulling down and "translation" of the roodloft. And it is on record that the parish committee agreed that it should be taken down and *translated* at the discretion of the churchwardens.

<sup>1</sup> Bloxam, "Principles of Gothic Architecture," pp. 114-5.

In 1561 (3 Elizabeth) an order was issued which throws further light upon the intentions of the Queen and her advisers with regard to the manner in which it was proposed to deal with the roodlofts and screens.

"Imprimis, for the avoiding of much strife and contention that hath heretofore  
"risen among the Queen's subjects . . . for the *using* or *transposing* of the Rood  
"Lofts, Fonts, and steps within the quires and chancels in every parish church.

"It is thus decreed and ordained *that the roodlofts as yet being at this day aforesaid*  
"*untransposed* shall be so altered that the upper part of the same with the sollar  
"be quite taken down, unto the upper parts of the vaultes, by putting some convenient  
"crest upon the said beam towards the church, with leaving the situation of the  
"seats (as well in the quire as in the church) as heretofore hath been used.

"Provided yet, that where any parish, of their own costs and charges by common  
"consent, will pull down the whole frame, and re-edifying the same again in joiner's  
"work (as in divers churches within the city of London doth appear), that they  
"may do as they think agreeable, so it be to the height of the upper beam aforesaid.

"Provided also that where in any parish church the said roodlofts *be already*  
"*transposed*, so that there remain a comely partition between the chancel and the  
"church, that no alteration be otherwise attempted in them, but be suffered in  
"quiet. And where no partition is standing, *there to be one appointed.*"

Not once only, nor twice, were such orders promulgated; and indeed there would appear to have been considerable difficulty in persuading or enforcing the rule in scattered parishes, for in the visitation articles of Archbishop Parker in 1569 we find inquiries made as to whether the roodloft was pulled down according to the order prescribed, and if the partition between the chancel and church was kept.

Again in 1571 the direction is given in the injunctions of Archbishop Grindal that "all roodlofts are to be altered," and once more in 1576, Grindal enjoins that the enquiry be made "Whether your Rood Lofts be taken down and altered, so that the upper part thereof with the sollar or loft be quite taken down unto the cross beam, and that the said beam have some convenient crest put upon the same?"

Even so late as 1573, and in so populous a centre as Norwich, "the vigilant Bishop of that diocese was informed that there was a Popish roodloft still remaining in St. George's church in Norwich, with the fashion and order as was in the time of popery.

"This, many good people, and especially one Morley of that parish . . . were as fond of it." (Styke's "Life of Archbishop Parker," p. 450.)

If this was the case in a place like Norwich,<sup>1</sup> how much greater must have been the difficulty of procuring the removal of the lofts in more distant and rural places, especially

<sup>1</sup> A very much more stringent interpretation was placed upon the injunctions of 1561 by some of the East Anglian people. Puritan feeling at this comparatively early date was very strong in the Lincolnshire district. Peacock ("English Church Furniture") quotes many records to this effect. At Ewerby the roodloft was taken down in 1561, and with the "bordes" desks were made. At Great Gonerby, in the first year of Elizabeth's reign, the roodloft was converted into stalls and the rest was burnt. Here the zeal of the laity certainly outran the royal instructions. At another church the wardens were directed to take down their roodloft "and superstitious *dome*," A.D. 1572.

in the West Country, where Catholic feeling and tradition had preserved its vitality. Instances of defiance of the archiepiscopal mandates seem to have occurred in such places as Chudleigh and Ashburton, in the former of which the loft was first pulled down in 1562, and the process had to be repeated in 1577—and in the latter case first in 1563-4, and again in 1579-80. Others seem to have escaped destruction, or to have been surreptitiously re-erected prior to 1583, in which year the Rev. Thomas Barrett commenced his visitation of the Archdeaconry of Exeter (6th April, 1583) by enquiring "Whether all images and other superstitious things were clean defaced, and Rood-lofts, taken down. If not, thro' whose fault it is so." The latter sentence seems to indicate a determination at last to punish the offenders.

From the foregoing it appears very clear that the removal of the screens themselves was never thought of by the reforming clergy. On the contrary, they seem always to have been studious to preserve the chancel partition, regarding it as a necessary feature, and ordaining its restitution where removed. It is evident also that the "taking down" of the roodlofts did not necessarily, and was not intended to, imply their complete destruction.<sup>1</sup>

The terms employed in these Elizabethan injunctions, when speaking of what is to be done to the roodlofts, should be carefully noted. We find the churchwardens are not instructed in definite or unmistakable terms to destroy the lofts, but to "alter," "reform," "transpose" or "translate" them. These words seem obviously to denote one of two things, viz., either that the lofts, as lofts, were not objected to, but that the gallery-fronts, with their carved tabernacle work, were to be taken down simply for the purpose of removing all objectionable features, and their place to be taken by some inoffensive substitute of "joiner's work," which would enable the platform to be used with security as a singers' or minstrels' gallery as in former times: or that it was desired that the lofts should be translated—*i.e.*, removed—to a position more consonant with reformed church principles.<sup>2</sup>

In the case of St. Margaret's, Westminster, it will be noted that the record describes the loft as having been "re-formed" for use as an organ-loft, a new organ being added at the same time.

Instances of the entire transposition of the lofts are fairly numerous, and there remain to this day a number of roodloft balconies or gallery fronts which have been thus dealt with and these have been removed to the west end of the church.

An examination of the screens remaining in our churches shows that the orders of

<sup>1</sup> The authors of the "*Hierurgia Anglicana*" remark as follows: "It has been generally but more hastily assumed, that roodlofts are condemned by the Anglican Church. It must be borne in mind that the injunctions for taking them down referred not to the lofts, *quoad* lofts, but to the crucifixes which surmounted them"; and they proceed to argue that the loft is of the nature of a pulpit, being the Western equivalent for the analogia, or Epistle and Gospel tribunes found in the Greek Church. "Now this use," they say, "is sanctioned even by prelates of the Genevan School: Grindal (1571) orders that the Communion Service should be read at the altar, all except the Epistle and Gospel, which are to be read *from the pulpit*."

<sup>2</sup> By the terms of the order of 1561 which is for the *using* or *transposing* of the roodlofts, it seems clear enough that this choice was left to the parishioners.

PLATE XXXIV



EAST FACE OF THE ROODLOFT LLANEGRYN, MERIONETHSHIRE





Archbishops Parker and Grindal were in the majority of cases obeyed. Thus we commonly find that all the ornamental superstructure was taken down as far as the beam over the vaultings of the screens, which was furnished with a carved cresting, the platform of the loft being in many cases preserved, though sometimes dispensed with—in which case the vaultings also disappeared, and a flat screen only remained. Occasionally the staircase to the loft was stopped up in Elizabeth's reign.

At the same time the choir and organist were located at the west end of the church, where a gallery or loft was constructed for their use, the old framework of the roodloft, with much of its characteristic ornament, being frequently utilised for the purpose.

Such entire transportation occurred in the case of Flamborough and Strensham. The former loft, after a sojourn of many centuries at the west end of the church, has now been restored to its original position over the screen, and it is a truly magnificent piece of work. The latter was transposed entire, figures and all, in Elizabethan days, and yet remains so.<sup>1</sup>

At Pennant Melangel, in North Wales, is a finely-carved panelled gallery in the west, which would appear to have had a similar origin.

That of East Brent is a notable instance in Somerset, of Post-Reformation date.

But in a number of cases the roodloft was retained as a singers' or minstrels' gallery, and the organ placed thereon, and this continued until modern times. Many, such as Chedzoy, have only suffered removal at a comparatively recent date. This fine loft was transposed to form a western gallery in 1841 (*Ecclesiologist*, Vol. IV, p. 197). The records of nineteenth century "restorations" are full of instances of the removal of these.

§ 53. Others, especially in the West Country, retained their ancient gallery fronts, which only disappeared when at last worn out. Some of these were replaced by Carolean panelling, as in the case of Cirencester, whose beautiful gallery stood over the screen until Sir Gilbert Scott cleared it away, and St. Mary's, Taunton, of which a sketch is given (Fig. 70), showing the curious, but not unusual, arrangement of a large pew placed in more modern days upon the screen, filling the chancel-arch, and facing towards the nave so as to obtain that great desideratum of Protestant worship, a good view of the pulpit. The extent to which the interior of a noble and beautiful church could be disfigured by the barbarities of the "churchwarden" era may be realised by reference to the illustration we give (Fig. 71), which is taken from a photograph of Winchcombe Church, Glo's., before its restoration. In this we see an exaggerated instance of the "flying pew" over the screen, whilst the position of the "three-decker" pulpit, and the consequent distortion of the seating, with such minor adjuncts as the stove pipe, complete a picture of sad deformity. Cullompton, Totnes (Plate LIB), Tiverton, and Uffculme are amongst those which were retained in Devon, and in which a Georgian framework took the place of the older one.

<sup>1</sup> Merevale furnishes another instance of what appears to be a singers' gallery of fifteenth century workmanship, with a large central projection for the organ. This is now at the west end of the church; but it is not in its original place, and has been cut clean in half to fit its present cramped position. The ornamental detail is returned around the ends, showing that it originally had its extremities exposed, and in the north end is a narrow door of access.

At Wigan the old organ-gallery over the roodscreen was removed in 1847; that of Manchester, with its old organ, in 1860.

Such instances as these illustrate the practices arising from the instructions of the

Elizabethan archbishops, which, as we have seen, left two alternatives open to parochial authorities in their dealings with the roodlofts.

1. To reform them by removing all superstitious features and ornaments, leaving a plain surface for the Scriptures, etc., to be written on.

2. To "translate" or "transpose" them, probably to the west end of the church, there to occupy the position afterwards recognised as the proper one for a singers' gallery.

The extreme care that was taken by the authorities to prevent any misinterpretation of instructions which would involve the removal of the screens themselves is strikingly evident in the sixteenth century injunctions. Not only were these "comely partitions" to

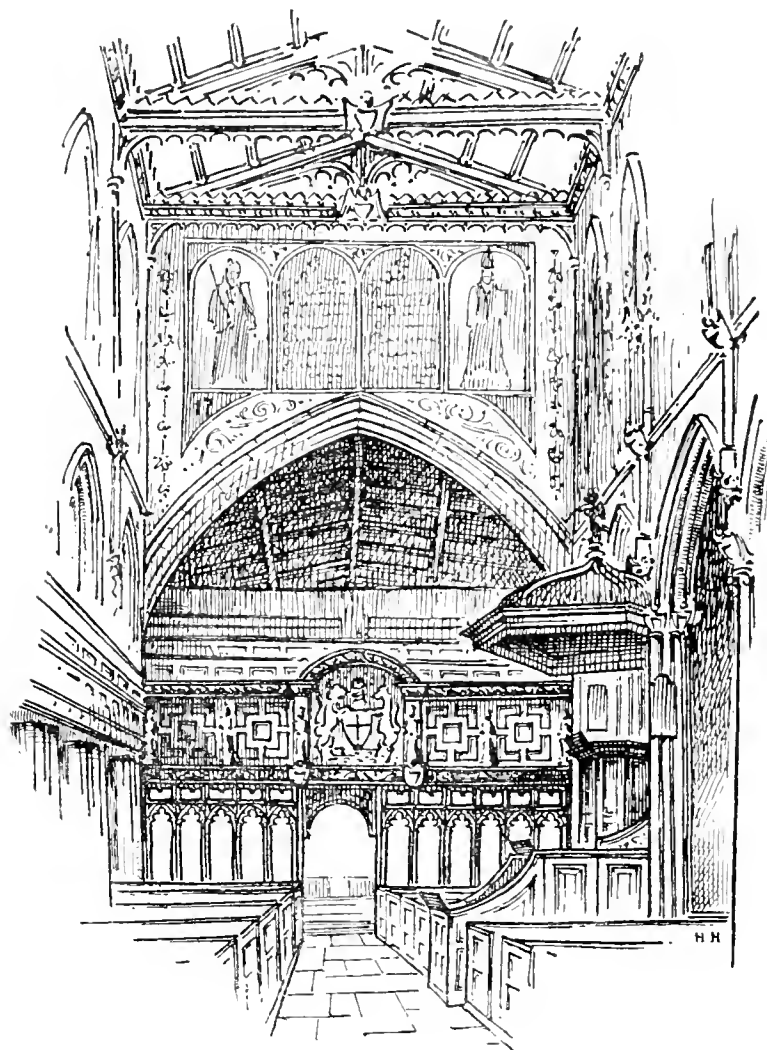


FIG. 70

remain, but if removed new ones were to be appointed. They represented an essential feature of Church arrangement sanctioned by the highest and most ancient authority. There is every evidence, too, that the Reformers intended to maintain the traditional idea of a complete veil or barrier between nave and chancel, and this we see in the preservation of the tympanum of the roodscreen.

§ 54. The origin and history of this solid barrier in our churches of the pre-Reformation period has already been dealt with, and reference has also been made to the tympanum with its painting as it appeared in Tudor days. It remains to be shown that this feature,

though no longer used for the display of superstitious paintings, persisted after the Reformation. Where the roodlofts had been removed, in obedience to the general order, a tympanum of lath and plaster was often constructed vertically over the screen, and on this it was customary to paint the royal arms with texts of Scripture, etc.

Thus at Sandford, Oxon, the upper part of the chancel-arch was boarded up and painted with the arms of Elizabeth (1602).

Prior to 1604 the Ten Commandments were ordained to be exhibited on the east wall, and in the letter to the Dean and Chapter of Bristol, dated 1561, above referred to, the instruction is "upon the walle of the East end of the quier whear the comm table usually doth stande, the table of the Commandments to be painted in large characters," etc.

In the spring of 1604 (new style) King James authorised the publication of new canons, 141 in number, amongst which was one ordering that the Commandments should be set upon the east wall of every church, where the people might best see and read

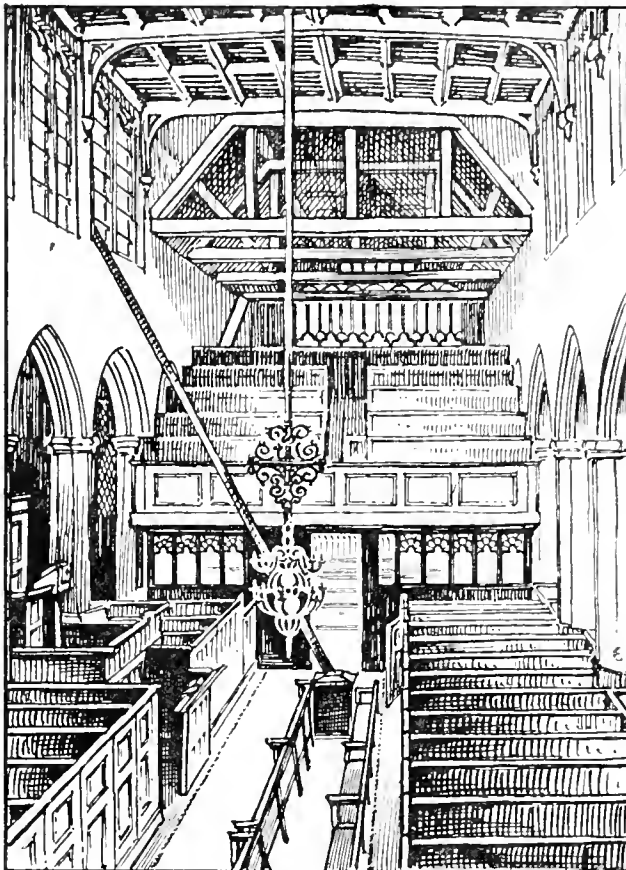


FIG. 71

them; whilst other chosen sentences were also to be written up in convenient places.

The space above the chancel screen was used as the most conspicuous and convenient place. Accordingly we find the tympanum or partition above the screen used for the exhibition of these tables, and in many instances such partitions were constructed where formerly none existed. The chapel of Wyke Champflower,<sup>1</sup> built in this reign, had a screen with solid tympanum over, bearing on the west side the royal and episcopal arms, the east side being entirely covered with a close writing of selected extracts from the Psalms and Gospels. This tympanum is still standing, though the screen has been removed. Others may be mentioned at North Lydbury, Salop; Lockington, Leicestershire; and Ellingham, Hants (Plate CXXVIII B), the latter being of especial interest, and affording one of those cases in which the original painting of the Doom is covered

<sup>1</sup> Near Bruton, Somerset.



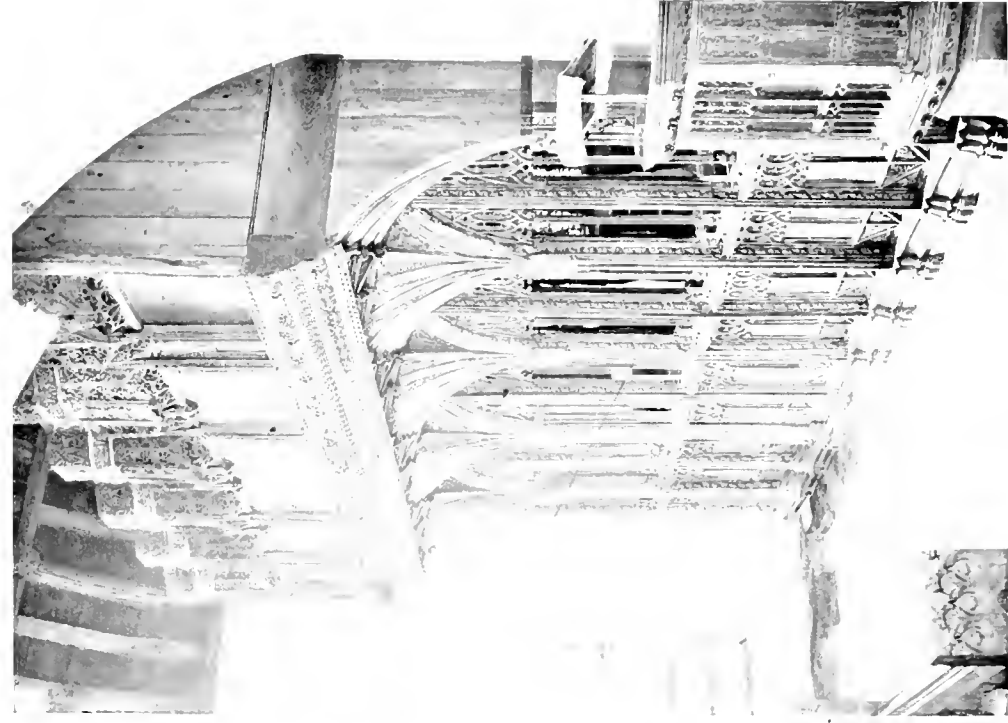
FIG. 72

PLATE XXXVA



THE ROOM OF THE KINGTON

PLATE XXXVB



THE ROOM OF THE AMINGTON



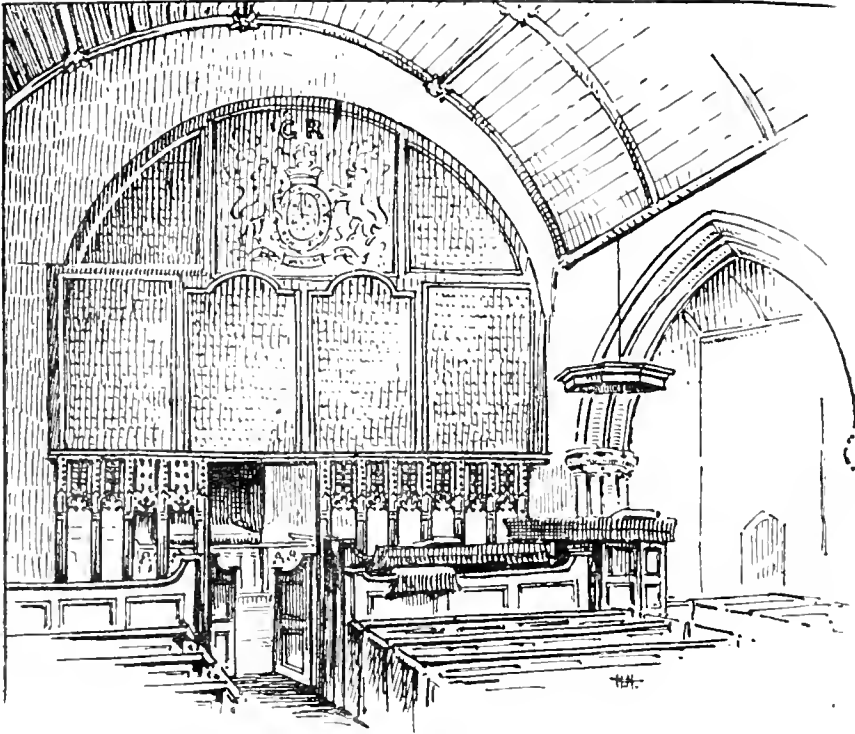


FIG. 73

written on it no fewer than three times.

At Parracombe, Devon, is another surviving instance, but here the inscriptions are of Hanoverian date (Fig. 73).

§ 55. But in addition to these writings, the setting-up of which was not a matter of compulsion (for King James's canons of 1604 were never endorsed by Parliament), paintings were often set up upon the tympana, and these were sometimes of a character near akin to those of the pre-Reformation period. That of the Doom in Gloucester Cathedral above-mentioned is the most notable instance of a post-Reformation painting of this character. It was discovered concealed behind plaster upon the west face of the

in this manner. The tympanum at Lockington is a very curious one, dating from 1704, and is alluded to in the previous section (p.96). An illustration is here given (Fig. 72).

At Woodbury, Devon, such a partition existed, and was only pulled down in 1848, when it was found that the Commandments had been



FIG. 74



choir screen in Gloucester Cathedral, some sixty years ago. An illustration has been given, taken from a monograph by G.Scharf, F.S.A. (Fig. 69).

At Bridestowe, Devon, until recent years, the screen was surmounted by a boarded partition exhibiting on its

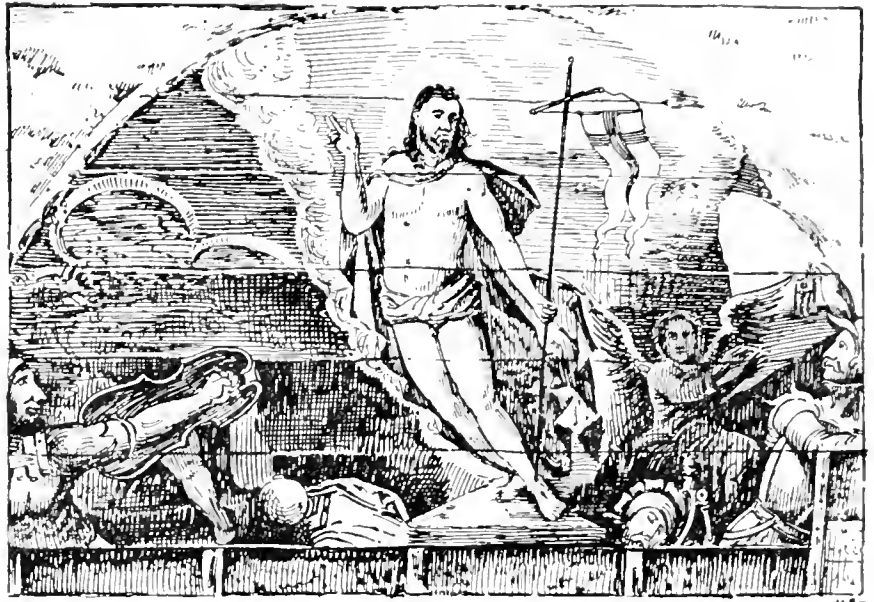


FIG. 75

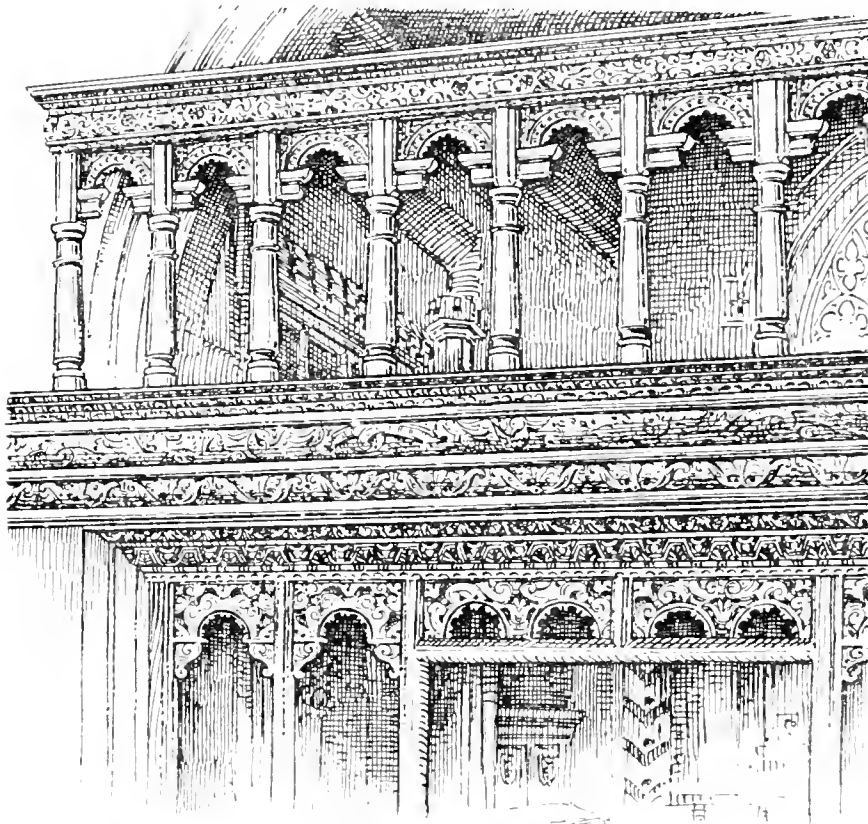


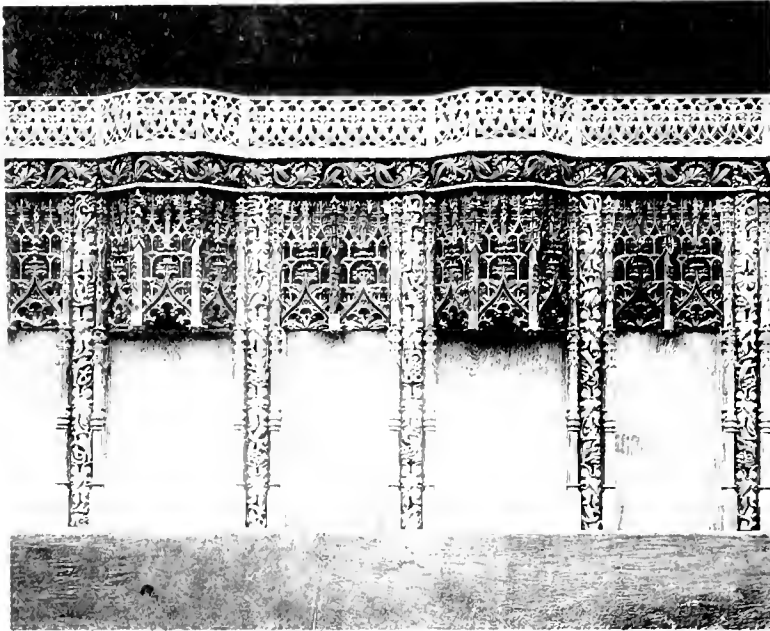
FIG. 76

western face the royal arms, with half-length figures of Moses and Aaron, and on its eastern face a well-executed painting of the Resurrection. (See Figs. 74 and 75). This appears to be an enlarged copy of one of the paintings on the roodloft at Exeter Cathedral, which are of very early post-Reformation date. The Bridestowe painting was put up in



PLATE XXXVI

DETAIL OF CANOPY-WORK ON GALLERY FRONTS



(A) ROOD-LOFT: KENTON: DEVON



(B) ROOD-LOFT: STAVERTON: DEVON



Queen Anne's reign. Many other examples of paintings over the screen might be cited. Mitcheldean Church has one of the most complete sets. Two very large panel paintings of Moses and Aaron may be seen at Washfield, Devon. They were formerly over the screen, but now are hanging near the west end of the church. Others remain at Helpringham, Lincs, over the screen.

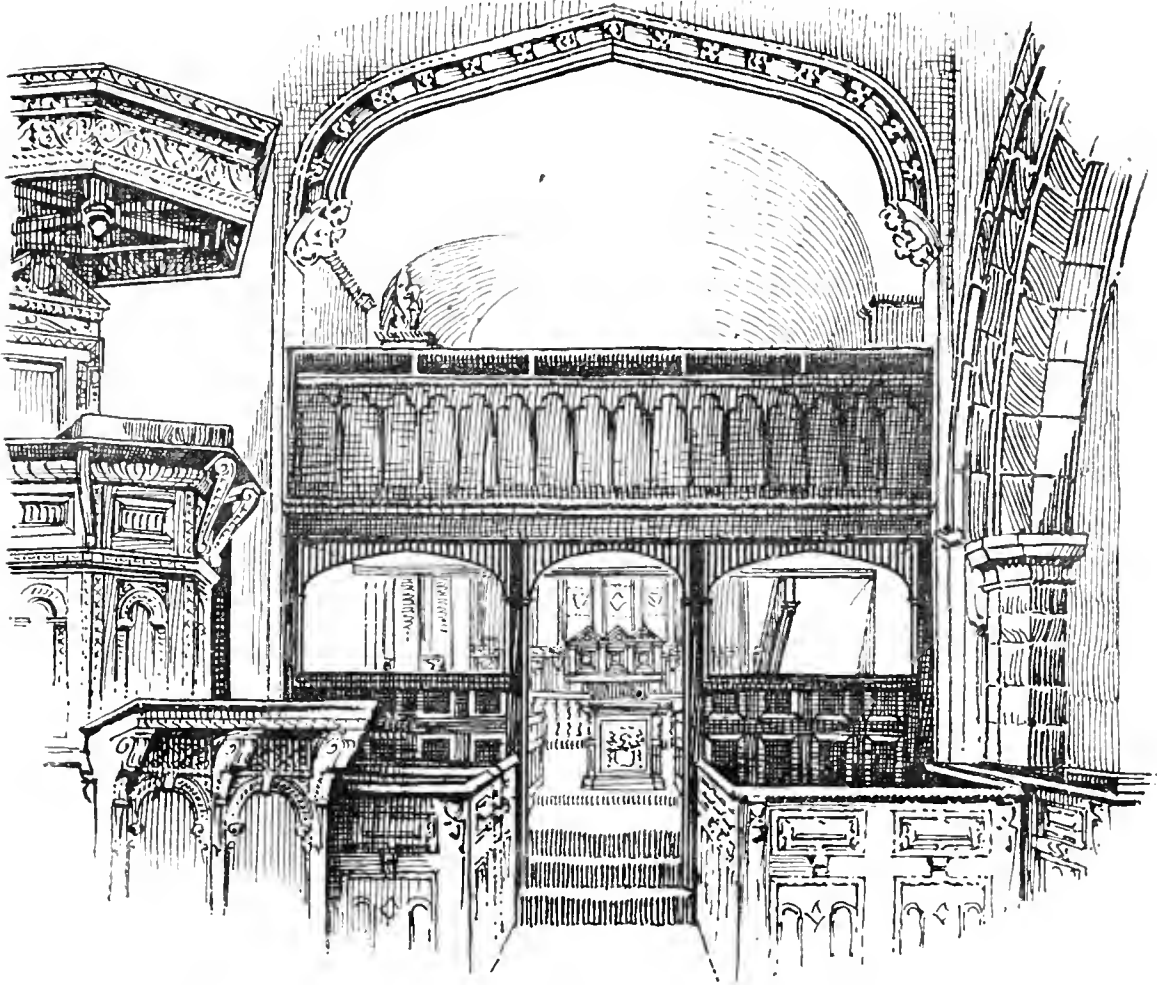


FIG. 77

§ 56. With very few exceptions, screens of the post-Reformation period did not bear lofts over them. This is only what might be inferred from the Injunction of 1561.

Probably the sole surviving exception is that of Rodney Stoke, Somerset,<sup>1</sup> an example

<sup>1</sup> Possibly the Jacobean screen at Wimborne was of this character, as mention is made of an organ-loft in connection with it. The gallery at East Brent, Somerset, now at the west end of the church, is said to have been removed from the chancel-opening, where it occupied the traditional position of the roodloft. It was erected in 1635, and exhibits a large rectangular projection or bay in the centre, evidently constructed to take the organ. That of Berrow was similar. The screen and loft at Sandon, Staffs, are a half-century later (1686). It is permissible to suppose that this gallery was originally erected for minstrels, but it has been used as a pew, probably for a long period (Fig. 77).

happily still perfect, and of which an illustration is given (Fig. 76). Here we have a distinct attempt to revive the old idea of the pre-Reformation roodloft, and it is interesting to note that this loft was in use until some time in the Victorian era as a singers' gallery. The Church in Stuart times seems to have frankly accepted the Elizabethan order concerning the screens, and, though studious to maintain, or, where necessary, to provide them, and to complete them by extending the partition over (corresponding to the veil of older times), the loft was omitted. The singers' gallery was generally placed in the west, this becoming its recognised position, though in rare instances (as at Ditchat) it was located in a transept.<sup>1</sup>

Their western position for a gallery is found in East Anglia very much earlier than this. That at Worstead Church, Norfolk, dates from 1550. Galleries at the west end of Jacobean date are numerous. There is one at Newdigate, Surrey, dated 1627. That of Kentisbere is very early and of good design. The galleries at Gressenhall, Norfolk, and Piddleton, Dorset, bear date 1635. That of Bishops Cleeve, near Cheltenham, is one of the finest examples, and was erected about 1640.

§ 57. It is interesting to observe the perpetuation of the old Gothic forms in the immediate post-Reformation type of a screen as exemplified at Lustleigh, Devon (Plate XLVIA) a truly beautiful instance of the adaptation of an old model to meet the exigencies

of the reformed rules. There is another charming example at Holbeton (Plate LXXXVIII), both being celebrated for the richness of their workmanship. Both the above are essentially Gothic in design.

In the Elizabethan era we begin to observe Renaissance screens, but these were certainly erected in much greater profusion during the two succeeding reigns, when the confusion resulting from the great upheavals of the sixteenth century had cleared, and Catholic principles had re-asserted their power in the Church of England.

The number and fine character of the screens, stalls, and other church fittings erected in the reigns of James I and Charles I bear eloquent testimony to the wonderful recovery of the Church and the consolidation of her principles during those reigns after the confusion of Elizabeth's

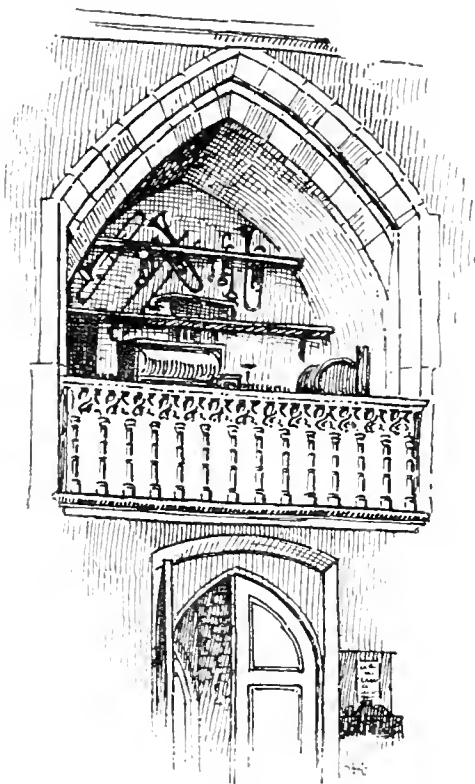


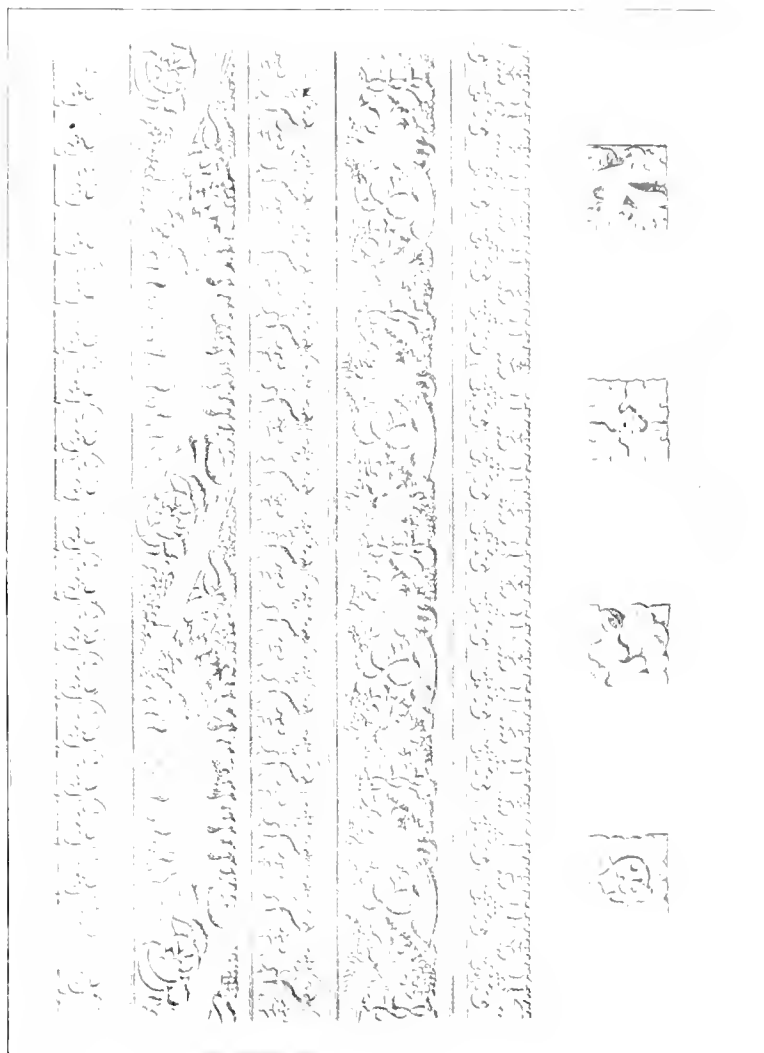
FIG. 78

<sup>1</sup> At Portishead the minstrels' gallery was located over the porch. The old musical instruments are preserved, and form a very interesting collection. The illustration shows a hand-organ, large drum, and several wind instruments, sufficient to form a somewhat powerful orchestra (Fig. 78).

# PLATE XXXVII

DETAILS FROM SCREEN AND ROODLOFT

ATHERINGTON, N. DEVON



CORNICES



time. Many of these works bear witness to the zeal and munificence of private donors, who, emulating the spirit of more ancient times, gave generously of their wealth and their labour to provide for the orderly equipment and adornment of their houses of worship. Magnificent examples of screenwork, dating from the reigns of James I and Charles I, are to be found in all parts of England.

Tilney, All Saints, Norfolk, and Passenham, Northants (1626) furnish good instances; at Trentham in Staffordshire is a fine example; whilst the south-west of England has abundant examples.

At Wimborne the screen and organ loft, together with the choir stalls, a magnificent work, date from 1610. It is lamentable to think that modern vandals have swept away the screen. The choir-stalls are returned, and have miserere seats. This instance is noted in the *Ecclesiologist* as being of peculiar interest from a ritual point of view, being erected before the Laudian reaction in favour of Catholic arrangement.

Ditcheat, Somerset, possessed another perfect example of a chancel screen, with holy doors complete and a set of chancel-stalls returned at the west end, the whole dating from 1630; but all were ruthlessly demolished not many years ago, and the best portions used by the rector for the decoration of the rectory-house.

Perhaps the most splendid instance surviving is the screen at Croscombe, near Wells (Plate XLVIII A), of which a portion of the detail is also shown (Fig. 79). This example dates from 1616.

In 1639 Sir Paul Pindar, at his own cost, repaired the great choir screen of St. Paul's, adorning the front with statues of the Saxon kings, and the inner side with figures of angels. Other stately and magnificent screens erected in the Laudian era are those of St. John, Leeds (A.D. 1634), and that which formerly stood in Great St. Mary's, Cambridge, and which was erected under the authority of Cosin, who was then Vice-Chancellor.

The Church of St. Giles-in-the-Fields was beautified by the gift of a screen of carved wood to replace the former one. This is described in a petition dated 1640 by the Puritans against Dr. Heywood, the Rector, as being "in the figure of a beautiful gate in which is

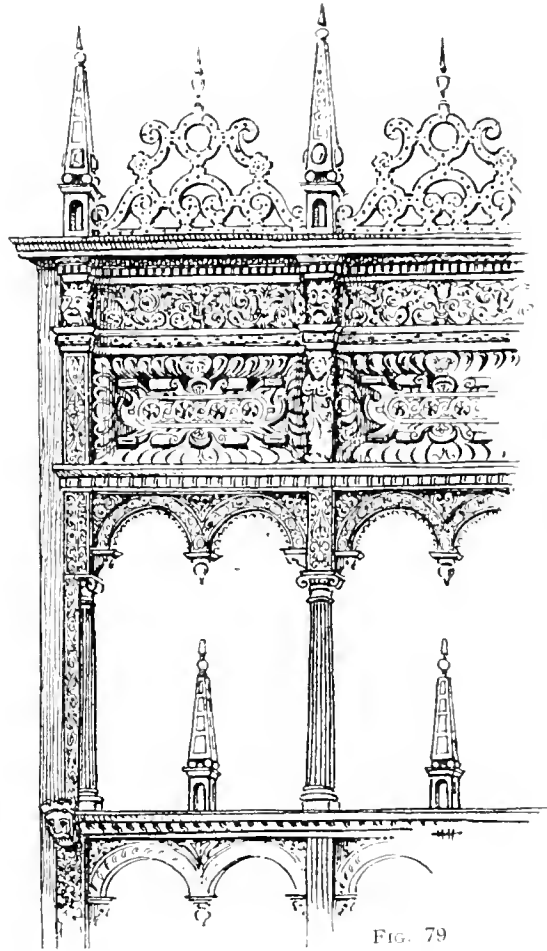


FIG. 79

carved two large pillars and three large statues ; on the one side is Paul with his sword, on the other Barnabas with his book, and over them Peter with his keys."

Much of the fine work of this date to be found in the churches of the south, south-west, and other parts of England bears witness to a fidelity to ancient principles and a dislike of Puritanical innovations. The strong affection for the old order of things even brought an endeavour to revive the old "Gothic" style of church-building, an art well-nigh forgotten and altogether out of fashion.

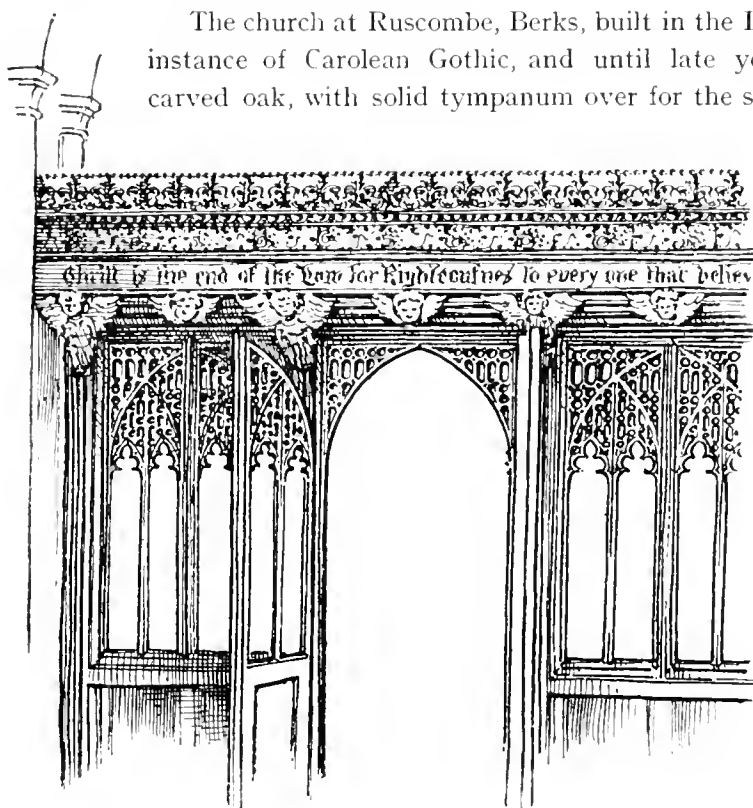


FIG. 80

The church at Ruscombe, Berks, built in the Laudian period, is a very fine instance of Carolean Gothic, and until late years retained its screen of carved oak, with solid tympanum over for the support of the Tables of the

Law and the figures of Moses and Aaron. The screen, alas! went to the builder's yard at the "restoration," and is now lost. The old paintings only recently disappeared.

The church at Low Ham, Somerset, affords a still more perfect example of this tendency. Here we have a complete building, with western tower, nave, aisles, and chancel, all in a very passable imitation of Gothic, the windows having a resemblance to Decorated tracery. The chancel is fenced off by a

screen of beautiful design and workmanship, but betraying in its execution the curious blunders that would naturally arise from the attempt to reproduce a forgotten style.

The spirit of the builders is shown in the text from Proverbs, which is carved along the cornice on the western face of the screen :

"My son, fear thou the Lord and the King ; and meddle not with them that are given to change."

On the eastern face is another text, part of which is visible in the illustration (Fig. 80).

The effort to reproduce the character of the Gothic work extended to the carved detail. This we observe in the enrichments of the cornices at Rodney Stoke (Fig. 76) which both in character and in arrangement are adapted from older models. Except for



the flatness and superficiality of treatment which differentiates the Jacobean from the Tudor carvings, there is an unmistakable resemblance.

§ 58. A few extracts may here be introduced in order to show the attitude of the representative clergy and laymen to the question of the screens at this time.

Thus Bishop Montagu, in his visitation articles of 1638, asks: "Is your chancel divided from the nave or body of your church with a partition of stone, boards, wainscot, grates, or otherwise? Wherein is there a decent strong door to open and shut (as occasion serveth), with lock and key to keep out boys, girls, or irreverent men and women?" The same Bishop ordered that in his diocese of Norwich the screen doors should be shut during the Communion, and not opened until it was finished.

The Bishop of Llandaff (A.D. 1634) may also be cited as certifying "that one Williams Newport, Rector of Llangula, in Monmouthshire, *hath pulled down the partition between the chancel and the church* and sold part, and disposed the rest to his own use, with some other violences, to the great profanation of that place, for which the Bishop desires leave to bring him into the High Commission" (Archbishop Laud, "Troubles," p. 533).

"More churches," says a writer in 1638, "have been built and adorned in the reign of King Charles than in the reign of many kings before. . . . The chancel, being divided from the church by grates of wood curiously carved, or of iron, or of brass, into comely works, is not only very graceful, but according to the laws and orders of the building observed by the primitive Christians."

Hooker, the great Elizabethan divine, to whose influence we owe perhaps the reconstitution of the Church, and who, to quote Collier, "baffled the Presbyterian cause so effectually that they have never since been able to appear in the controversy to any purpose," defended roodscreens in the following words:

"Our churches are places provided that the people may there assemble themselves in due and decent manner according to their several degrees and order. Which thing being common unto us with Jews, we have in this respect our churches divided by certain partitions, though not so many in number as theirs. . . . There being in ours for local distinction between the clergy and the rest . . . *but one partition*, the cause whereof at the first (as it seemeth) was, that as many as were capable of the Holy Mysteries might there assemble themselves, and no other creep in amongst them."

Dr. Cosin, Bishop of Durham, who erected the grand and massive screen formerly standing in that cathedral, was accused in 1642 by the Puritans of going further in the direction of the Hebrew Temple divisions. The following is quoted from "A Catalogue of Superstitious Innovations," etc., brought into Durham Cathedral, p. 14:

"Whereas the rubrick saith, chancels shall remain as they have done in times past, our new-fangled Durhamers, and other country priests (following their example) have made *cancellus inter cancellos*, chancels within chancels, that is, an enclosure to divide their altar eastward from the quire, as the Sanctum Sanctorum was separated with curtains from the rest of the Temple. Who ever heard of two chancels in one church, till Durhamers invented it, contrary to the rubrick

“and the example of all churches in England in former times? So that they have  
 “a holy church, a more holy chancel, and at the east end thereof a most holy  
 “enclosure where the altar must stand, *into which no man or woman may have access,*  
 “*but priests only.*”

Archbishop Bancroft also defends the distinction between nave and chancel (*circ.* 1578), which he says “doth greatly offend the tender consciences (forsooth) of the purer part of the Reformers. Inasmuch as Mr. Gilbey, a chief man in his time among them, doth term the quire *a cage.*” Grindal, who was suspended for his Puritanical leanings, was insistent on the preservation of the screen.

The policy of Laud, who in the teeth of fierce opposition attempted to restore many ancient ceremonies and observances in the Church, inspired the Puritans with horror, and with a dark suspicion of a secret intent to lead the country back to Popery. Thus the way was prepared for the Puritan reaction which came with the Cromwellian era.

We should look in vain at the Commonwealth time for signs of respect for ecclesiastical tradition. Berwick-on-Tweed is almost singular in possessing a church of this period; and although the interior arrangement is on Presbyterian lines, strangely enough the space surrounding the Communion Table is enclosed by screenwork.

In 1644 an ordinance, dated May 9, was promulgated for “the taking away of all organs,” and this included an injunction that roods, fonts, and organs should not only be taken away, but utterly defaced. In the zeal of the Puritans for the destruction of the organs, which frequently stood upon the screens, more of the carved woodwork was laid low. Yet the total amount of damage done to the screens at this time seems to have been comparatively small. Much mischief, however, was done by the fanatical persons to the paintings of saints, prophets, apostles, etc., which adorned the lower parts of the chancel screens, especially in East Anglia; and it is to this date that the wanton obliteration of their features is probably to be ascribed.

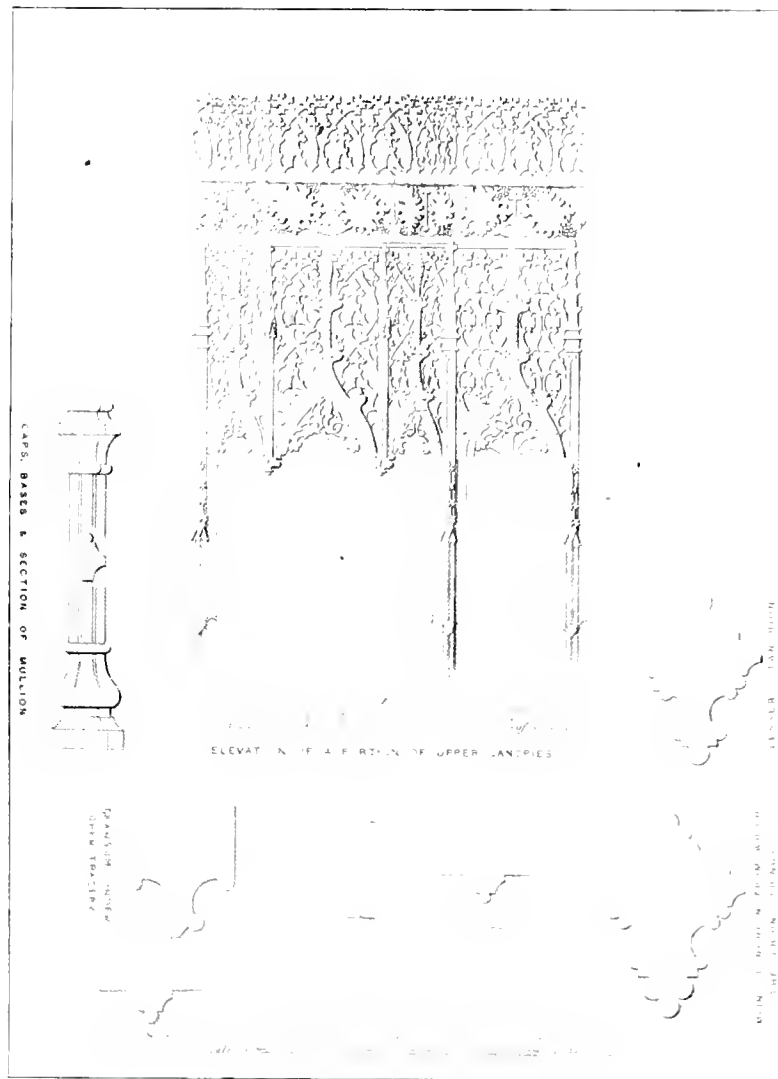
§ 59. With the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II the continuity of ancient principles of church building and arrangement is again apparent, and, with due allowance for the growth of Italian forms and fashions, a fair degree of fidelity is maintained.

Wren, who cannot be accused of any great leanings towards the older forms—witness his original and rejected scheme for St. Paul’s—was nevertheless careful in his churches to preserve the customary separation. At St. Peter’s, Cornhill, one of his City churches, may be seen a high chancel screen; and at All Hallows, Thames Street, was another, which has been preserved elsewhere since the church was pulled down. Some of the churches then erected contain a low partition answering the same purpose. The chancel screen of Lydiard Tregoze Church is of this date, and differs from earlier examples in one essential feature—namely, the absence of a central doorhead.

This period also is not without its apologists for the use of screens. There is a sermon in print by Bishop Beveridge, who defends them, speaking of the “cancelli,” or partition of lattice-work, as having been employed in all considerable churches ever since the days of Constantine the Great. He points out the great symbolic importance of the feature.

# PLATE XXXVIII

ATHRINGTON, N. DEACON



CANOPY WORK ON ROODLOFT



§ 60. Towards the commencement of the eighteenth century the tendency to introduce innovations in style and arrangement of churches becomes more marked. Old traditions are weakened, and individual taste and fashion begin more and more to obscure and to dominate ancient principles. Neo-Paganism in literature and art and a growing scepticism in religious matters caused the study of Christian antiquities to be neglected. There was an increasing apathy in Church matters. Yet the old "High Church" school pursued the even tenor of its way, and vestiges of its quiet undercurrent

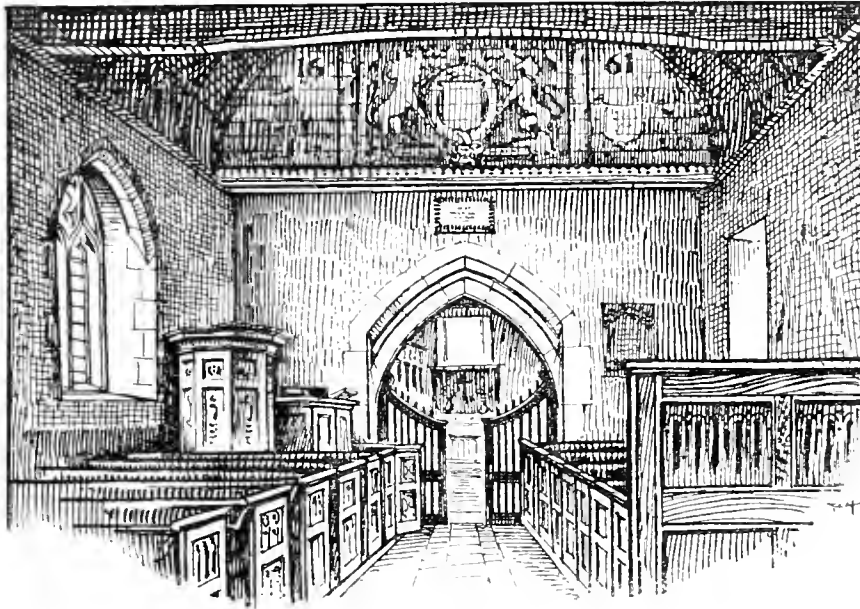


FIG. 81

of thought and practice, and adherence to ancient usages, may be traced in those churches, few in number, which were refurnished at this period on the old lines. At Crowcombe, Somerset, the chancel is enclosed by a screen and parclose of singular beauty, of early Hanoverian date (Plate XLVIII B). Another and later example is that of Cruwys Morchard (Plate XLIX A). This is late Georgian, but yet exhibits a very close accordance with older models as regards general arrangement. Stalls line both sides of the chancel, and are returned against the screen to the westward. Both the western screen and the parclose are Corinthian in design, as the illustration shows, and are of refined character. The royal crown reposes upon a carved cushion beneath the pediment of the central door.

Occasionally chancel gates are found to take the place of high screens at this date. These may perhaps be regarded as having a practical rather than a symbolic importance, but may nevertheless be regarded as "screenwork," and as such come within the scope of this book. An illustration is given of the gates at Wickhamford, a small Warwickshire church, containing many Post-Reformation features of interest (Fig. 81).

The latest instance known to the present writer which is clearly belonging to the old order, and not a product of the nineteenth century revival, is in the quaint old church of Molland Botreaux, North Devon, until lately unrestored. Here is a quasi-screen formed of two large openings, having in the centre a chancel gate, set in an arched doorway, the whole surmounted by a solid plastered tympanum bearing the Tables of the Law and the royal arms on another panel, with the date 1808 (Fig. 82).

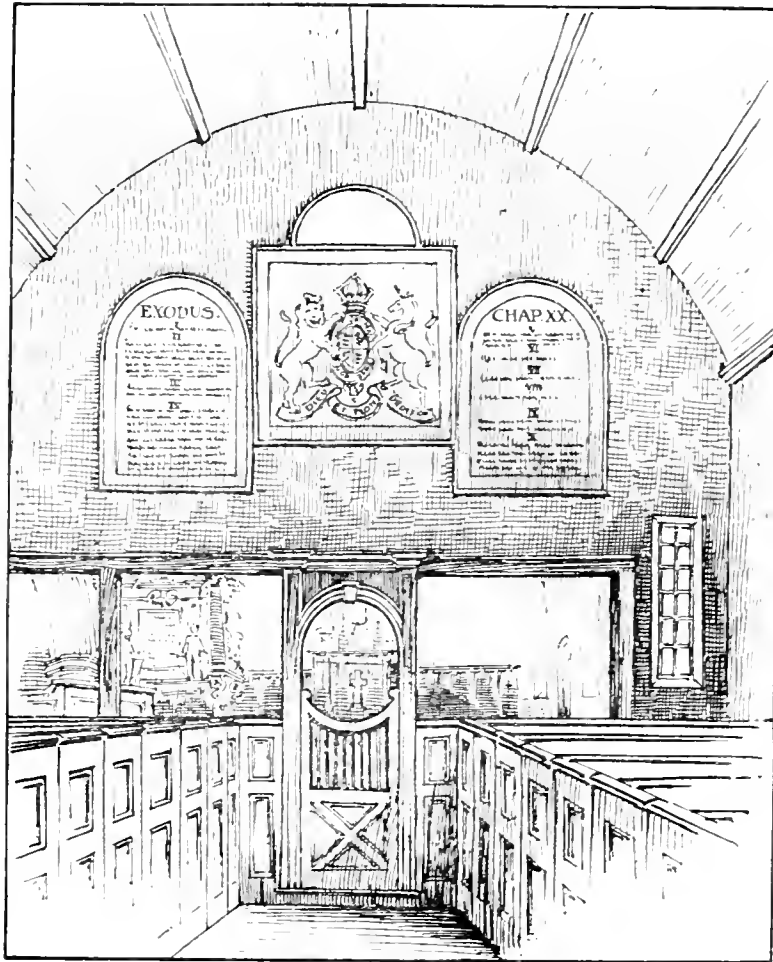


FIG. 82

The new century brought with it the stirrings of revival, but little knowledge or regard for the time-honoured landmarks of the Church's history. In the new fire of Evangelical zeal the externals of worship were apt to be disregarded, if not treated with contempt. Features of high antiquity, almost apostolic in their origin, but whose history and meaning had been forgotten, were set aside indiscriminately as so much mediæval or "popish" rubbish, and fell under the ban of an ignorant prejudice.

The churches were cleared of obstructions and opened up to the fullest extent, so that the congregational idea

of worship, "all seeing" and "all hearing," should be achieved.<sup>1</sup> To this end galleries and three-decker pulpits were multiplied, and screens were swept away wholesale.

In Cornwall nearly every screen was sawn down to the level of the rail beneath the lights.

Some lofts remained which had been fitted up as pews. (See note, p. 99.) What were known as "flying pews" were of this order, and frequently filled the chancel arch. These were usually occupied by the lord of the manor or leading resident, and being proprietary,

<sup>1</sup> The same ideal was aimed at in nearly every Cathedral in France in later days.

PLATE XXXIX  
THE ROOD-LOFT AS ICONOSTASIS



(A) WITH PANEL PAINTINGS: STRENSHAM: WORCESTER



(B) WITH NICHE FOR STATUARY: FLAMBOROUGH: YORKS





were left alone, and the screen consequently retained. But when the revival set in, and Church principles were once more recognised, the immediate effect, though favourable in principle to screenwork, did not always tend to the preservation of the remnants of ancient work.

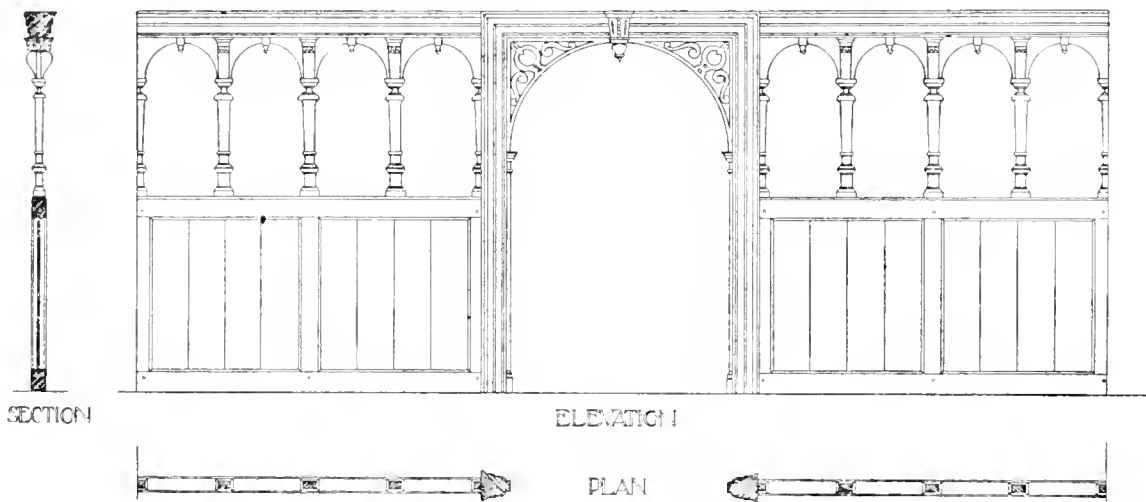
Galleries, flying pews, tympana, and tablets, accretions of Post-Reformation days, were cleared away in hundreds by the early restorers, and where old screens remained these were frequently discarded by reason of the expense which would have been incurred in their restoration, for they were generally mutilated and rotten through eighteenth century neglect.

These earlier restorers, too, had a preference for thirteenth century models. This style was an easy one to imitate and cheap withal. Simplicity of design being thus in vogue, much of the elaborate later work was suffered to go, and elementary geometric forms were repeated *ad nauseam* in pitch pine or other softer wood.

But with more recent years have come discernment and a more jealous regard for the treasures of antiquity that still remain. This feeling it is desirable to foster yet more strongly, since it is to be feared that there are still much prejudice to be disarmed and ignorance to be enlightened. Of late years the chancel screen has received a gratifying increase of appreciation at the hands of clergy of all shades of opinion, who seem often, in default of actual knowledge of its historic claims, to realise instinctively its fitness and desirability.

It has been our endeavour to show the sustained regard in which the screen has at all times been held by scholarly Churchmen and men of moderate views.

Those who desire to perpetuate in our churches this beautiful feature may certainly appeal with no small confidence to the verdict of our ecclesiastical history, which, whether it embody primitive custom or Reformation principles, gives throughout an emphatic and unmistakable sanction to the chancel screen in our parish churches.



CHANCEL SCREEN (*temp.* 1670). IN THE ALMSHOUSE CHAPEL, BRAY, MAIDENHEAD



PART II

---

SCREENWORK IN THE COUNTY  
OF SOMERSET



## PART II

---

### SCREENWORK IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET

THE woodwork in the churches of Somersetshire exhibits a great diversity of type, both in general features and in detail—the variations being much more strongly marked than we are apt to find them in other districts. Many specimens of screenwork form a class by themselves—being original compositions, and very unlike any others. Of this order are the screens at Fitzhead (Plate LIVB) and Curry Rivel (Fig. 88)—the former a late example of the arcaded and vaulted screen, the latter an exceptionally early specimen of the same class.

The Somerset screens, for this reason, do not fall quite so readily into groups as do those of Devon, which, in spite of their peculiar differences of detail, present for the most part a decided family likeness.

But there are nevertheless some very well-marked groups in the county, and some of these follow very closely the main territorial divisions, those of the north-east or Mendip district, for example, conforming to one type, those of the Dunster district to another, whilst in mid and south Somerset are other groups of which mention will be made.

The screens also require classification according to date, there being a large number of works of a comparatively early and simple nature in contrast to the more elaborate structures of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Following these broad lines we may group the screenwork of the county under two main heads, classifying them as follows :

A. Early screenwork, in which the framework of the screen finishes with a rectangular head, originally supporting a simple flat ceiling or hollow coved soffit to the roodloft, generally to the west of the screen, so that the whole projection was on that side.

B. Screenwork of the later type in which the lights have arched heads, and the loft is supported by “ fan-vaulting ” on both sides of the screen, thus bringing the width of the loft centrally over it.

To the above we may add a third list of Post-Reformation screens, which cannot be included in either of the other sections.

The following are the lists of existing screens or fragments of screenwork coming under the above heads, and the date of the work where known has been in each case added, those whose actual date has not been determined having been assigned approximate dates, such as in the writers’ opinion may reasonably be inferred from the character of the detail and the general type.

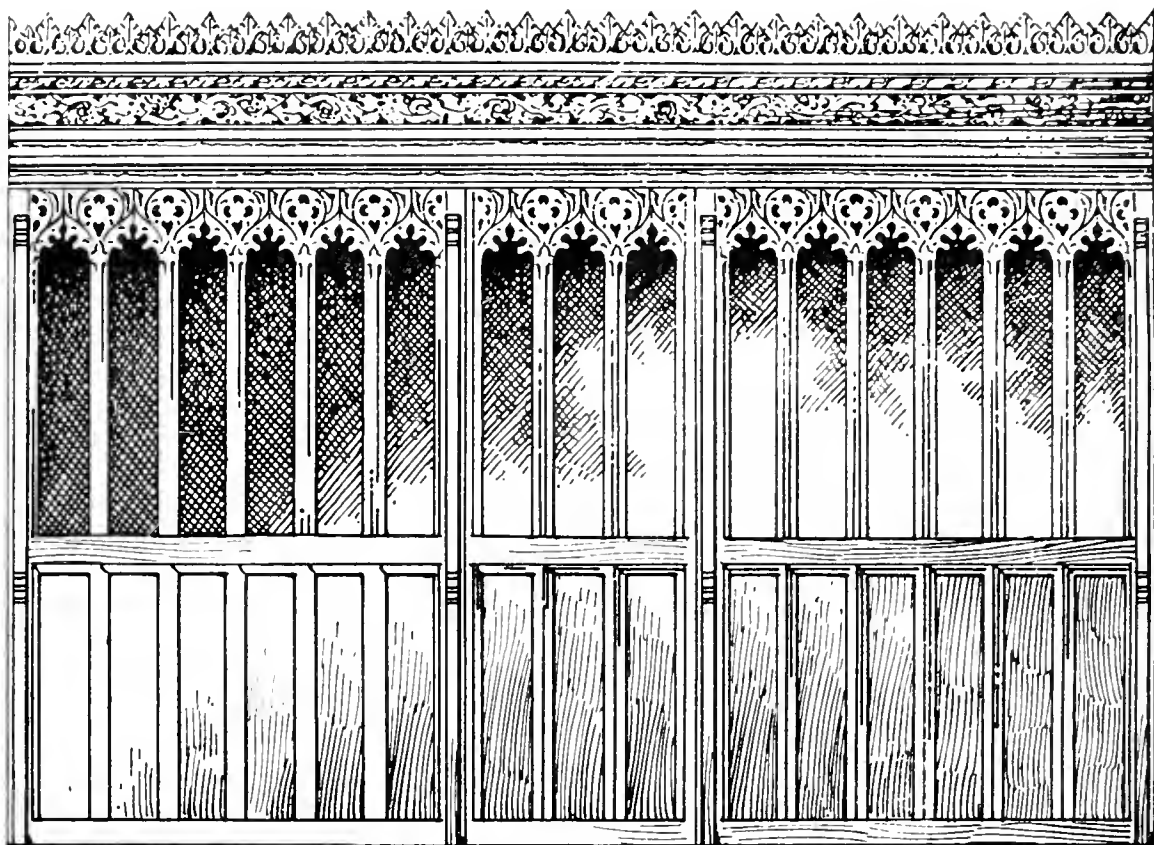


FIG. 83

A (1) PORLOCK (removed), 1250-1300  
CULBONE.

WESTON IN GORDANO (original tracery removed).  
PORTBURY (Fig. 84).  
MEARE (old screen in N. transept).  
WILLITON (remains).  
ENMORE (now at Huish Episcopi).  
PAWLETT (Figs. 83 and 83A).  
LUCCOMBE (removed).

With tracery of a simple nature, generally of a "Decorated" appearance set in rectangular-headed compartments. Date probably anterior to the fifteenth century, say 1350 to 1380.

(2) NUNNEY.  
BACKWELL.  
WELLOW.  
CONGRESBURY (chancel screen).  
COMPTON MARTIN.  
W. PENNARD.  
PRIDDY.  
MELLS.  
PILTON.  
LONTON.

The north-east Somerset or Mendip group of rectangular-headed screens having tracery of a distinctive Perpendicular type and varying in date from about 1400 to the latest Pre-Reformation period (see individual notices).

(See Fig. 86.)

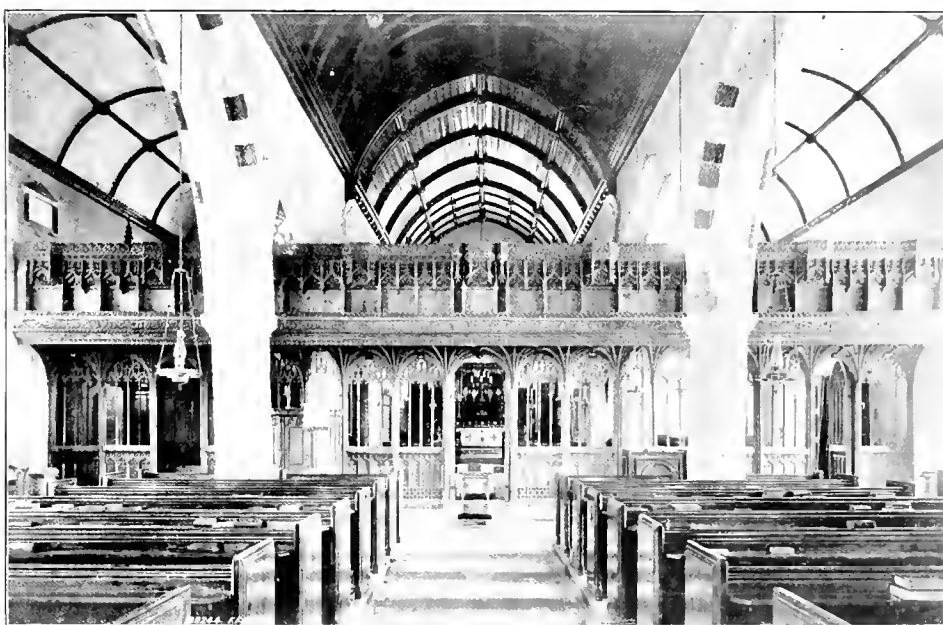
# PLATE XL

## TWO DEVONSHIRE ROODLOFTS (RESTORED)



(A) ROODLOFT AT LEW TRENCHARD

Restored in 1899 Showing the "*Poor Man's Bible*"



(B) ROODLOFT AT STAVERTON, DEVON

Restored in 1891-2





## NOTE TO LIST A (1)

In the earliest the work is extremely plain, that of Culbone is the rudest in execution ; others of the same class are those of Enmore (now at Huish Episcopi) and Pawlett ; whilst the remains of screens at Williton and Luccombe bespeak the same character. The examples at Enmore and Pawlett (Fig. 83 and A) have refinement which shows a date approximating to the end of the fourteenth century and the same may be said for the work at East Quantoxhead and at Portbury (Fig. 84).

## NOTE TO LIST A (2)

The screen at Nunney is the earliest. The formation of the crockets and terminal foliage—the shape of the archlet over same, and the general style and execution of the work point to an early and good period of the art. It may be placed as a work of date not much later than 1420. The Backwell, Congresbury, Wellow and Compton screens are later—but all good and vigorous in design. Priddy shows a falling off ; this and Pilton are much later—the date of Pilton is 1508 (*vide* Parish accounts). The screen at Loxton is so debased that it may be regarded as late sixteenth century work.

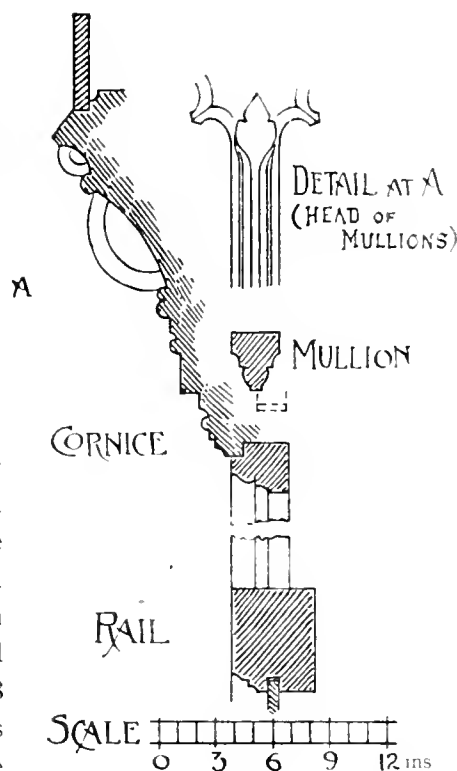


FIG. 83A

- A (3) CONGRESBURY (S. Chapel screen).  
 WHITESTAUNTON.  
 ELWORTHY (panels).  
 BROMPTON RALPH (remains).  
 EVERCREECH (panels) now in western gallery.

Screens in which the tracery heads are of purely decorated or fourteenth century type, but the lights are arcaded, and set in rectangular heads. The date of these screens would vary probably from 1350 to 1308.

- A (4) RADDINGTON, *c.* 1400.  
 CHEDDAR.  
 CHEW MAGNA.  
 KEYNSHAM, *c.* 1465.  
 LONG ASHTON, *c.* 1500.  
 WRINGTON.  
 BRIDGWATER (now parcloes to chancel), *c.* 1400.  
 WHITCHURCH (S. transept screen).  
 THORN ST. MARGARET.  
 ————  
 WINSHAM.  
 OTTERHAMPTON.  
 STOCKLAND BRISTOL.  
 STAPLE FITZPAINE.

Screens having a more or less Perpendicular character of tracery, but exhibiting, within the rectangular framework, an arcaded form. They are of all dates and periods from *c.* 1400 to *c.* 1530, and follow several distinct schools of design.

## STONE SCREENS

It may be convenient to group with class A the stone screens of the county, since they have the same leading characteristic of a rectangular framework for the support of the loft, and their construction does not admit of anything in the nature of ribbed vaulting. Of this order are the screens at :

A (5) BRYMPTON D'EVERCY (Fig. 129).  
CHILTON CANTELO.

KILMERSDON (Fig. 85).  
STOKE-SUB-HAMDON.

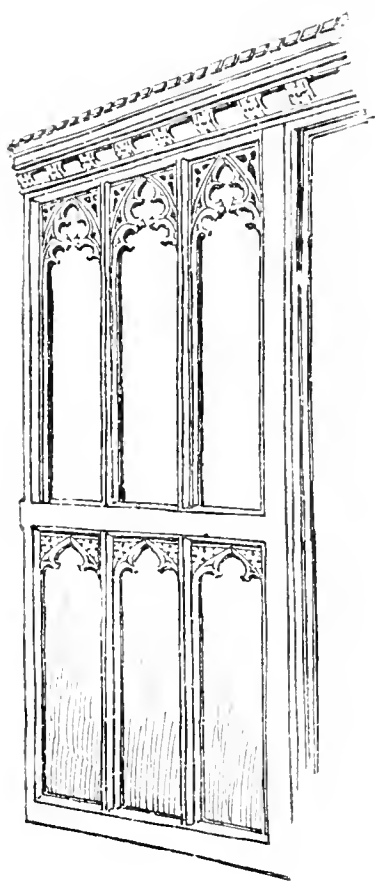


FIG. 84

Stone bases to roodscreens occur at :

CONGRESBURY.  
COMPTON DUNDON.

PUXTON.  
WILLITON (removed).

In the case of Congresbury and Williton, the screen was of wood, on a stone base.

Other specimens of stone screenwork in the county are those of Wells Cathedral (the Jubé and transeptal screens), and Prior Bird's chantry in Bath Abbey, but these come into a different category, since they do not belong to the class of parochial screenwork. There was also a stone screen in recent years at Creech St. Michael.

Owing to the predominance of Celtic over Saxon models of church-building in this country, we do not find any marked traces of the mural screen or chancel-wall with narrow opening, such as early churches in counties more centrally situated show us. There are several churches with chancel-arches of moderate dimensions, it is true, but there is, so far as we are aware, no complete instance remaining of the chancel-wall of early type with narrow arch or doorway between two windows or hagioscopes, except at Nunney, where the arch is a considerable width ; but the church at North Stoke, near Bath, before the recent reconstruction, is said to have possessed a partition of this nature. At Ashill is an instance of a narrow arch with side arches forming a triple opening to the chancel, and the remains of another at Seavington.

Before passing to the consideration of the screens of the later, or fan-vaulted type, a few remarks on the ecclesiology of the county may be useful.

The churches of the more northerly part of Somerset present a striking contrast to those of the western and southern districts. Whilst the latter in most cases reflect to a great degree in their plan and general structure the character of the Devon and Cornwall churches, the former approximate far more nearly to the average English type as it is found all over the Southern Midlands. The division between nave and chancel is more strongly defined, the chancel-arch is a customary feature, the nave is generally far superior in height to the aisles, and these are not often found carried so far to the eastward

# PLATE XLI

DOUBLE SCREENS (CANOPIED), WITH TRIPLE OPENING



(A) ROODSCREEN: BURGHILL: HEREFORDSHIRE  
Shewing Cancelli to East and Triple Colonnade to West



(B) STONE ROODSCREEN: COMPTON BASSETT: WILTS  
Shewing Cancelli to East and Triple Arcade to West



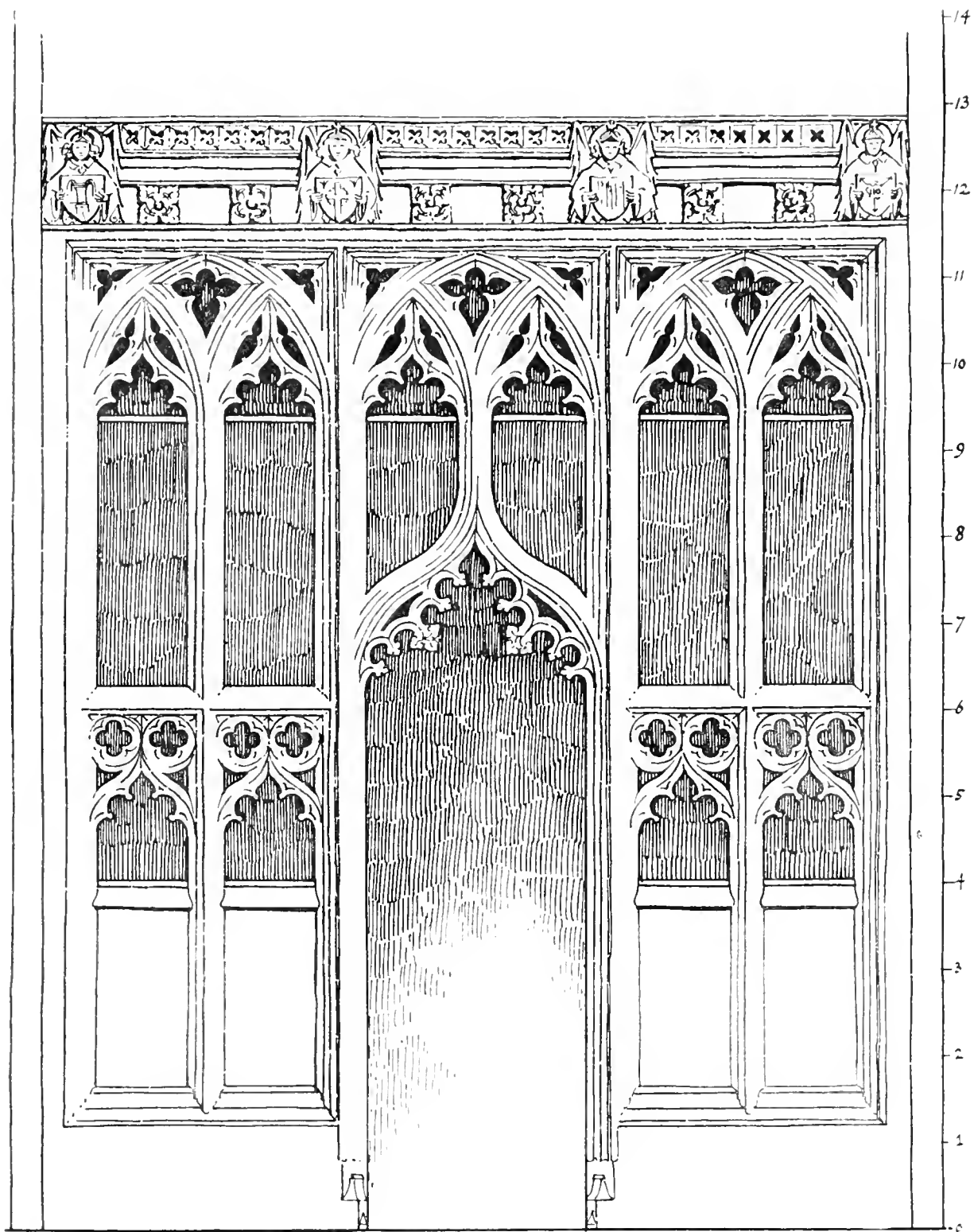


FIG. 85

as is the case in the true West-Country type of church. Hence, as might be expected, the arrangement of the screenwork is found to exhibit corresponding differences of character, and, saving in one class of churches of an intermediate type, it is quite unusual to find any indications of the continuous screen running across nave and aisles without a break as we see it in the West.

In place of this there would appear to have been ordinarily a central high screen between nave and chancel, with separate screens to the aisles or chapels where such existed. The naves being superior in height to the aisles, and frequently clerestoried, these secondary screens would often have been lower than the roodscreen.

The intermediate class of churches above referred to are those which lie on the frontier, so to speak, of the south-west peninsula, in which the old British traditions of church-building and church art maintained their ground against other influences. These

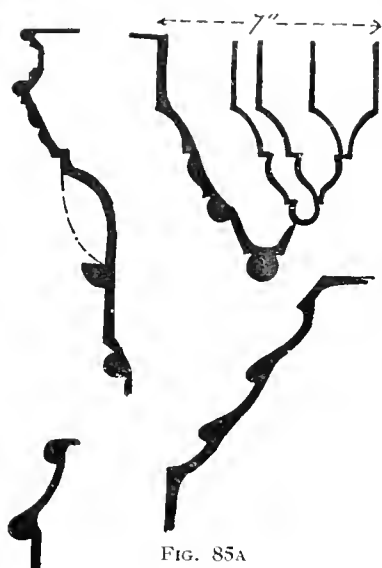


FIG. 85A

buildings betray a strong tinge of West-Country feeling, and often exhibit a compromise between the two ecclesiological types. We see this in the abnormal widening or opening up of the chancel arch (often at the cost of stability, as at St. John's, Glastonbury)—the motive being the reconciliation of the existence of the structural barrier with the utmost degree of clearness or continuity for the interior. Among the churches of this order are those of Portishead, Wrington, Long Ashton, Chew Magna, Bishop's Lydeard and several others. Occasionally we find in these churches a screen across nave and aisles of continuous design—the sections uniform in pattern and in height, as at Wrington, Backwell, and Chew Magna, or of slightly divergent patterns as at Long Ashton and Cheddar.

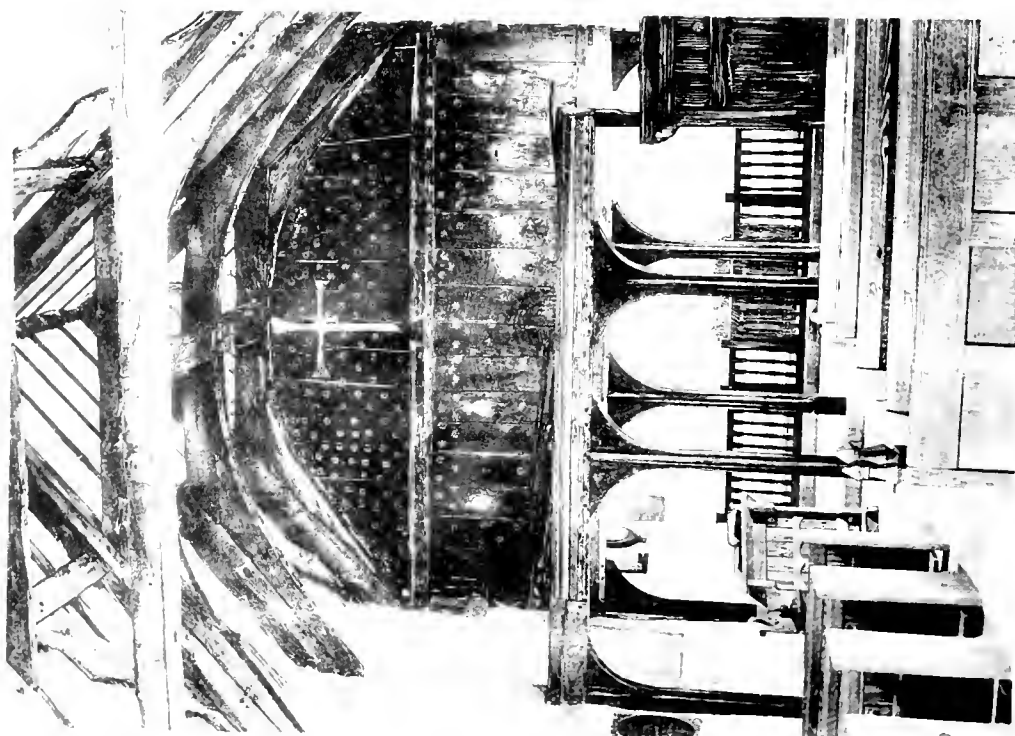
But the churches of the north-east district, which are structures of the more definitely "English" order, give us a well-marked variety of screenwork, classed in the foregoing list as A (2). The localities in which specimens of this order survive are practically all comprehended in the Mendip area.

The churches of Nunney, Wellow, Compton Martin, Backwell, West Pennard, Priddy, and Loxton, all have more or less perfect specimens remaining, whilst at Mells, and possibly in one or two other places, are fragments of work of a similar description.

These screens though representative of the earlier type of roodscreen (*i.e.*, flat-headed) are not all of early date, by any means, but in this part of the county the later work follows faithfully the older type instead of being supplanted generally by screens of the more elaborate "vaulted" type, as we find further west or south. The tracery heads which characterise this group of screens present a series of narrow compartments of rectangular shape in which appear canopies of ogee form (Fig. 86) enriched with foliage crockets and finial, the canopy open below with a cinquefoil cusping to the head of the light, and the space above the canopy filled with simple Perpendicular tracery. The

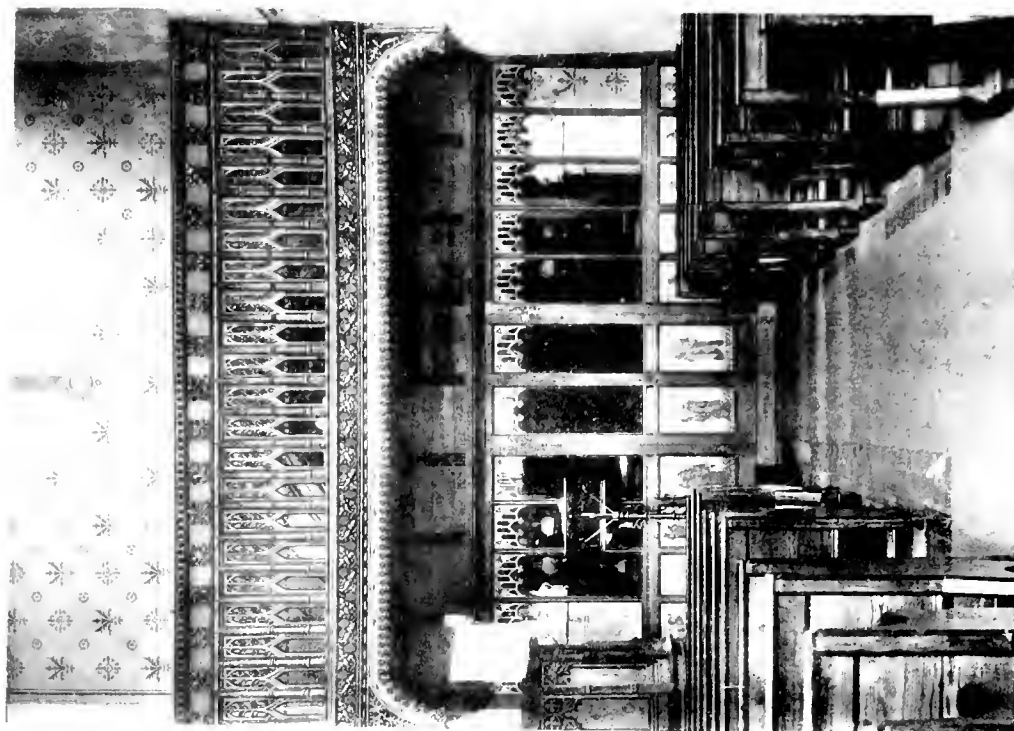
# PLATE XLII

## ROOD-LOFTS WITH TYMPANIC BACKGROUND



(A) ROOD-LOFT WITH WOODEN TYMPANUM AND PAINTED ROOD AT  
LLANELLI: BRECKNOCK

*The Screen is double, consisting of two Arcades, each showing the triple opening  
Note the "Squants" in the Tympanum*



(B) ROOD-LOFT WITH MURAL TYMPANUM AT  
AVEBURY: WILTS

Here the Rood-Loft rises in front of the Chancel Arch  
and conceals it

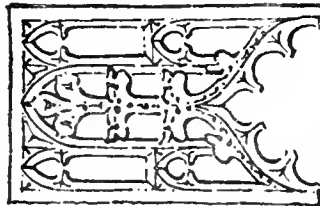




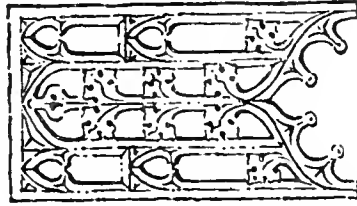
# NORTH SOMERSET SCREENWORK.

—  
Comparative Elevations  
of Tracery Heads.

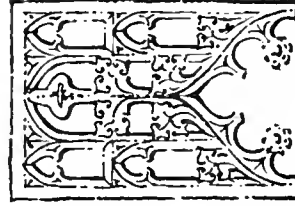
PLATE I



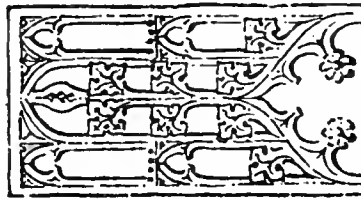
NUNNEY



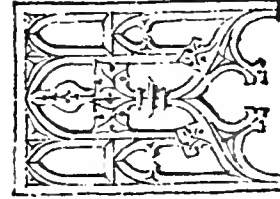
WELLOW



BACKWELL

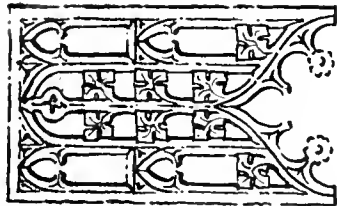


COMPTON MARTIN

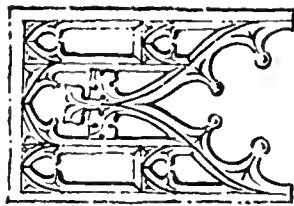


WEST PENNARD

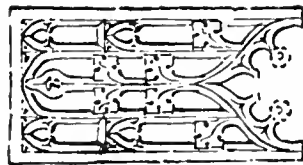
PLATE II



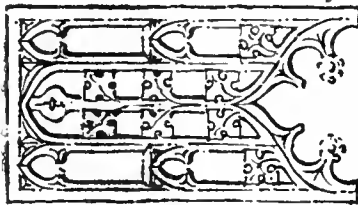
PRIDDY



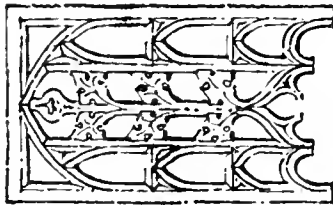
MELLS



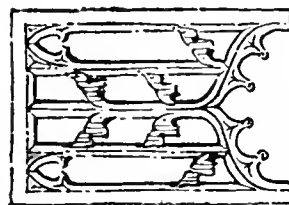
YATTON



CONGRESBURY



PILTON



LOXTON

Fig. 86

design is varied within certain limits in the specimens extant, but a reference to the Plate will show how strongly marked is the unity of character pervading the whole group. In other localities we get something of a nature which recalls this type, but nothing precisely similar, so far as we are aware, exists outside the county limits—so that we have here a complete little local school of design. There are one or two Devonshire examples—the screens at Parracombe and Atherington (chancel screen) (Figs. 87 A and B), which bear some slight resemblance, but the difference in detail is really greater than a brief inspection would suggest. Similarly the Gloucestershire type—as exemplified by the screen at Ashchurch (Plate LXIIA) strongly recalls this variety—and the illustration here given of

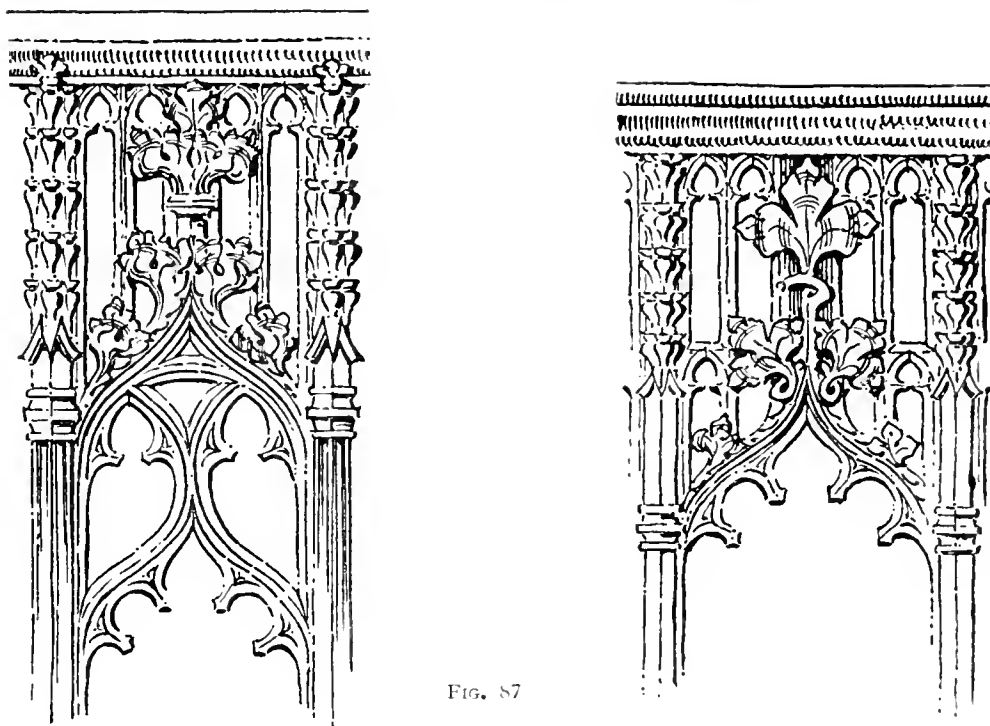


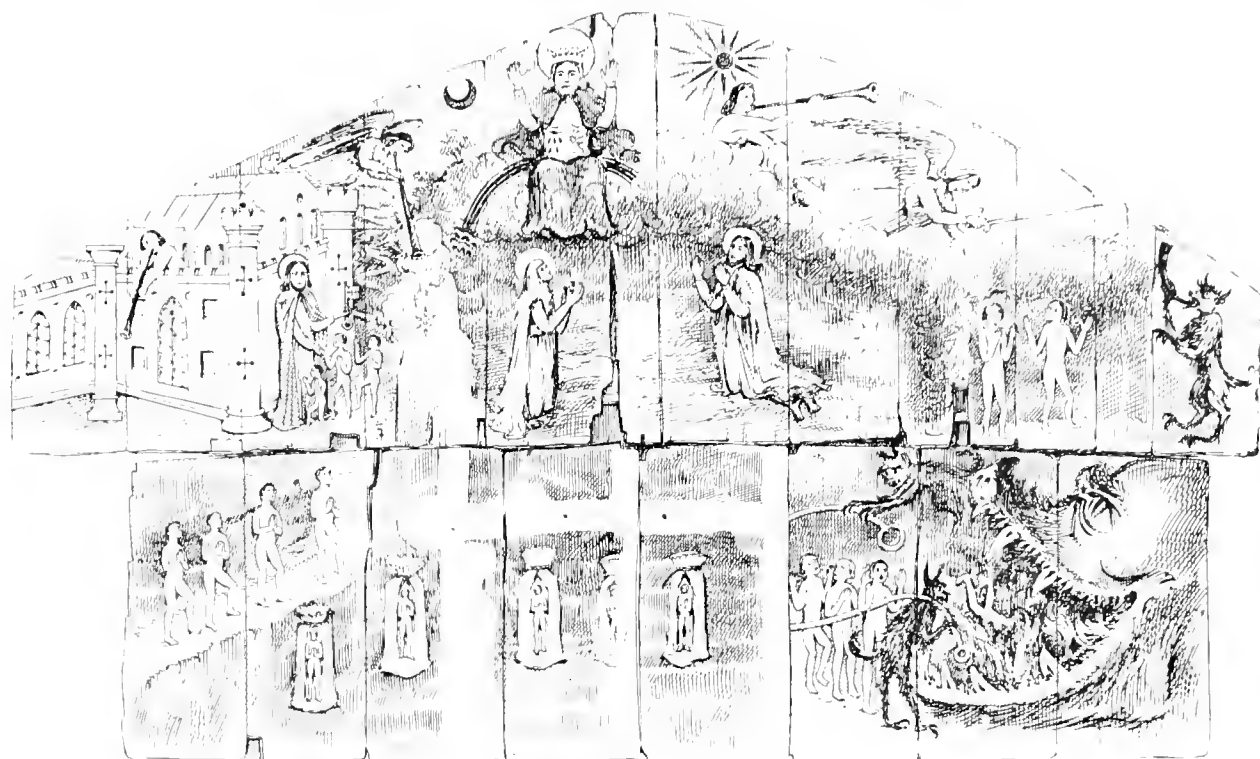
FIG. 87

the Ashchurch screen is of special value in that it shows the nature of the original coving for the roodloft which headed all these screens. It is to be regretted that except at Keynsham (Plate LIIIA) where the screen itself is of a different type, no specimen of this coved or canopied head is extant in the county, although in the immediate vicinity we may yet find the feature surviving at Willand (Devon) (Plates XLVIIA and LXXXA), and at Milborne Port (Dorset border), whilst at Christian Malford, Wilts, is an exceptionally fine and lofty one.

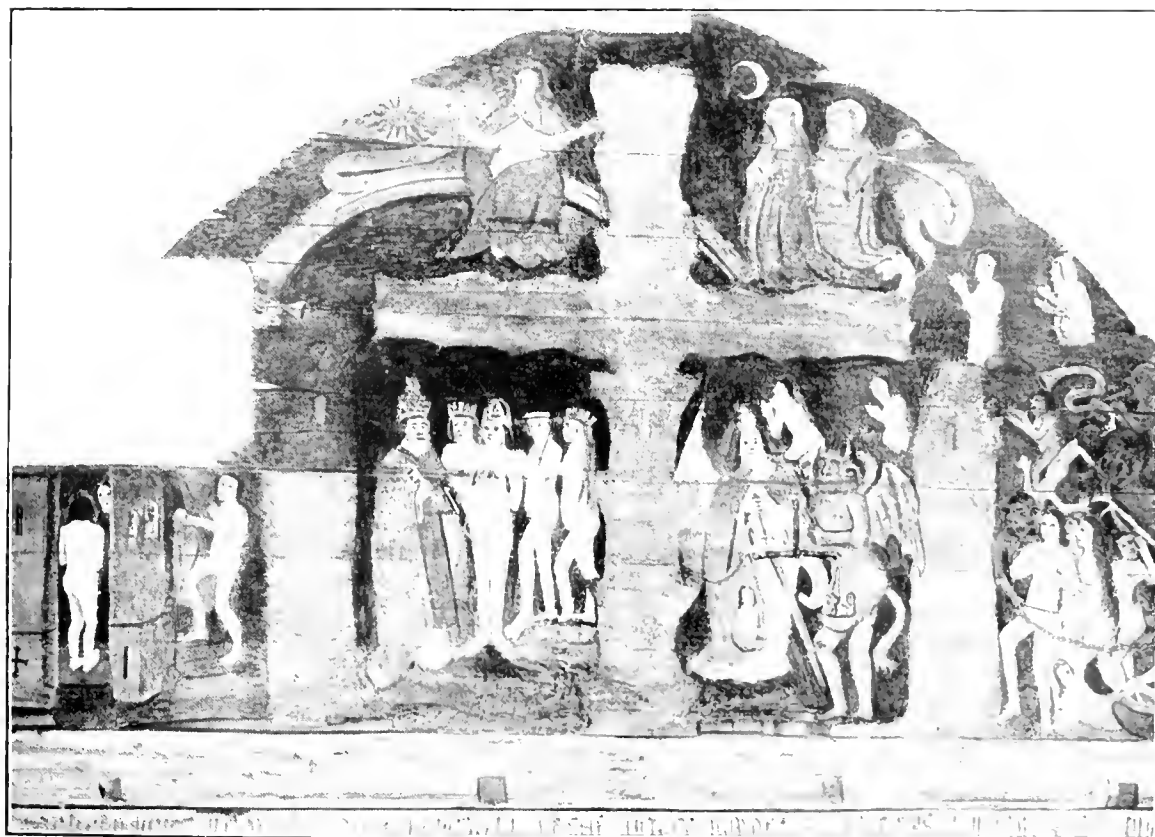
The illustration of the Raddington screen (Fig. 99), in which a certain amount of conjectural restoration has been attempted, also shows this feature, and at Avebury, Wilts, (Plate XLII B) such a screen and loft may be seen in all its pristine glory surmounted by the enriched balcony-front with its row of niches for statuettes, and the loft, it will be noted, projects to the westward of the screen, finding an independent support on a beam or bressummer in front.

# PLATE XLIII

PAINTED "DOOM" PANELS ON SCREEN TYMPANA



(A) FROM OVER THE ROODLOFT AT DAUNTSEY, WILTS



(B) FROM OVER THE ROODLOFT AT WENHAM, SUFFOLK



(B) The general group B of Somerset screens embraces all those which were designed according to a later model, more highly developed in an artistic sense. These were framed to support a loft placed centrally over them, the ribbed vaulting between the arched-headed lights projecting some two or three feet on east and west sides for the support of the loft and its beams, with the cornices and galleries. These fan-vaulted screens may be grouped as follows in the general list B, fixed or approximate dates being given as before.

B (1) [THE MINEHEAD OR DUNSTER GROUP.]

MINEHEAD.  
DUNSTER (nave screen).  
CARHAMPTON.  
BICKNOLLER.  
CANNINGTON.  
TIMBERSCOMBE.  
WITHYCOMBE.  
BRUSHFORD.  
ST. DECUMAN'S.  
WEST QUANTOXHEAD.

} Having arched openings usually of four lights, filled with Perpendicular tracery and closely affiliated to the screens of Devon, but with some characteristic differences of detail, which create a local type.

(2) TRULL. [This screen approximates in character to the above group.]

(3) COMBE ST. NICHOLAS.  
HALSE.  
NYNEHEAD.

} Quite "Devonshire" in character, of the "Exe Valley" type, like those at Bradninch and Kentisbere.

(4) BISHOP'S LYDEARD.  
LYDEARD ST. LAWRENCE.  
WIVELISCOMBE [remains].  
EAST PENNARD [remains].

} A type bearing marks of Flemish influence, in the detail of panels, etc. The panels preserved at the two last mentioned localities are of the same order as the work at Milverton. [See individual notices.]

NOTE TO B (1 to 4)

The arcades are divided by stout bead-moulded standards from which rises the graceful vaulting which is their most conspicuous ornament. This vaulting, like most of the Devonshire examples, consists of panels enriched with sunk tracery, usually of a geometric kind, divided by moulded ribs. Over all runs a cornice enriched by several rows of conventional vine-leaf and pomegranate enrichments divided by heads, and each screen had originally a carved upright cresting to complete the series at the top, and underneath a smaller inverted one. The roodlofts which these screens supported were of an average breadth of about 6 feet, except in some cases like that at Minehead where there was a width of about 8 feet.

B (5 to 8)

B (5) CURRY RIVEL.

B (6) FITZHEAD.

(7) NORTON FITZWARREN.  
LONG SUTTON.

} This screen requires separate classification, being of unusually early character for a fan-vaulted screen—very rude and massive in execution, and with many peculiarities of detail (see note).  
Three late screens, of different types, each quite unlike any other remaining in the county. The last is a very poor and late piece of work; *temp.* 1525. (See individual notices.)

B (8). We now come to a very important class of screens, also fan-vaulted, but of great size and dignity of proportion, and presenting a marked difference in detail to those under previous heads. They include the following:

High Ham (1499), Queen Camel (c. 1450), Trent (c. 1440), Middlezoy, Mere (c. 1450), Kingsbury Episcopi, and Banwell (1522).

Their leading feature is their refinement and rather severe type of Perpendicular tracery. The tall arcaded lights being divided at half their height in the case of High Ham, Mere, Queen Camel and Trent screens by a traceried transom-bar, the cornice ornaments and the enrichments of the vaulting also have a character of their own. The screen at Milborne Port shares their character in its tracery, but has a horizontal coving. Altogether these screens form a class peculiar to this county. The screens at Banwell and Kingsbury Episcopi are different in many respects to the rest of the group and are both very much later—that of Banwell being a late sixteenth century screen in which the traceried transom is omitted and the tracery itself has not the refinement of the earlier examples. But Kingsbury is also later and has been so very much altered and modernised that it is difficult to see what its original character really was. The best examples are those of High Ham, Mere and Queen Camel, which are certainly by far the finest screens in the county, and whether for their dignity of proportion, the beauty of their detail, or the admirable skill and precision of their workmanship, are equally admirable.

The fan-vaulted screens are usually found in connection with a particular type of church—one almost universal in Devon and Cornwall, and which possesses no structural division between nave and chancel.

The barrel roof runs continuously from east to west without a break internally, the aisles being generally continued eastward flanking the chancel. There being no chancel arch, the roodscreen assumes a character of prime importance and necessity, as well as a symbolic or liturgical value. Hence the accentuation of dignity and respect bestowed upon this feature in the West Country.

In the Minehead district of Somerset are several churches of this type, and hence the vaulted screens are relatively numerous.

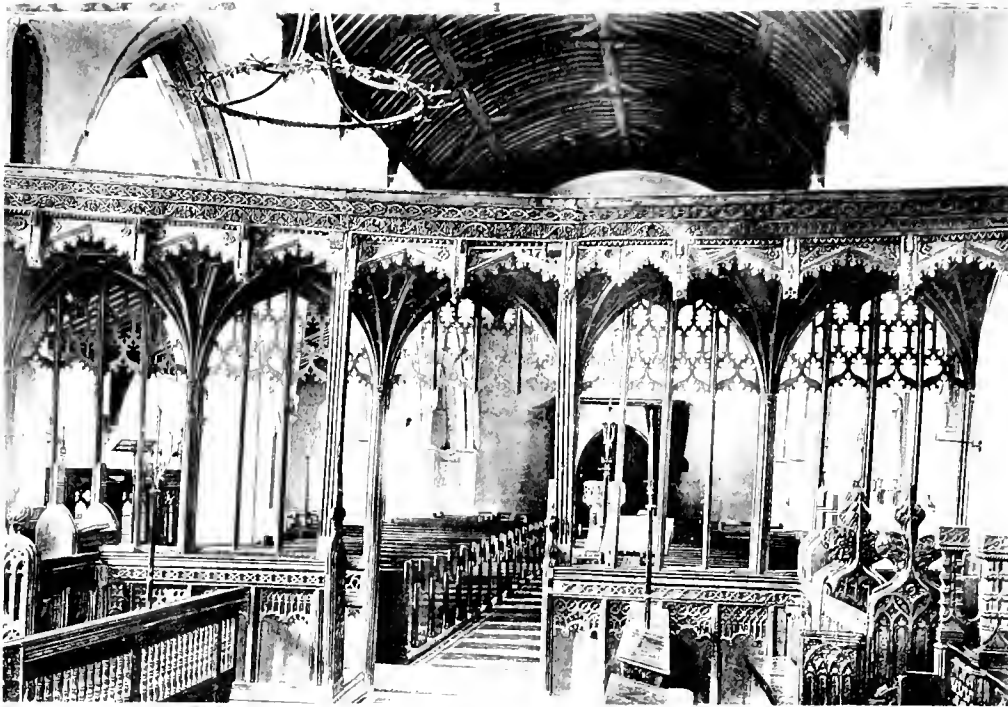
Minehead, Selworthy, Porlock, and Dulverton are among those churches which offer examples of the continuous roof—St. Decuman's exhibits a slender stone arch, a mere rib following the curve of the roof over the chancel-opening, and the aisles are, as in a Devonshire church, continuous north and south of the chancel.

An examination of any of these churches of the south-western type will readily enable one to gauge the importance of the screen in their internal economy. Their injudicious removal has but too often left the churches thus cleared a mere empty shell, naked and forlorn.

The frequency of this type of church in the south-west arises from the fact that towards the close of the fifteenth century a great era of church building and church enlargement was inaugurated, and churches in Somerset and Devon were very largely rebuilt under the influence of a school of building associated with those districts which were more peculiarly the home of the Celtic men, and in which the customs and traditions of the original British church still lingered.

In this process there was a tendency to discard the simple fittings which had done duty in the more ancient structures, in favour of more elaborate woodwork, of ampler proportions, and this was carried out in a wholesale manner in Devon and Cornwall, and more partially in Somerset.

PLATE XLIV  
CANOPIED SCREENS



(A) ROODSCREEN : CONWAY



(B) ROODSCREEN AND LOFT: MONTGOMERY





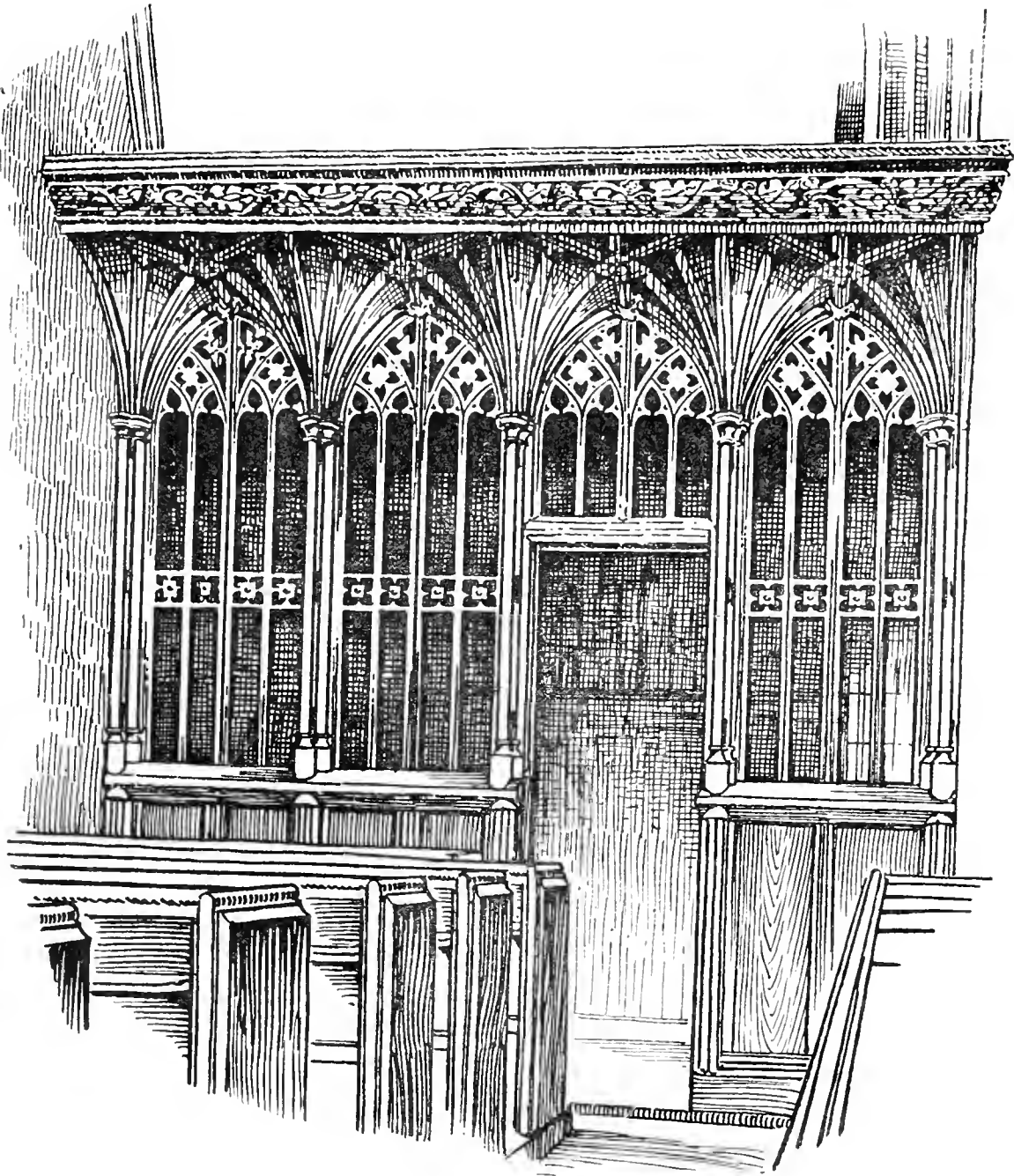


FIG. 88

## ROODLOFTS

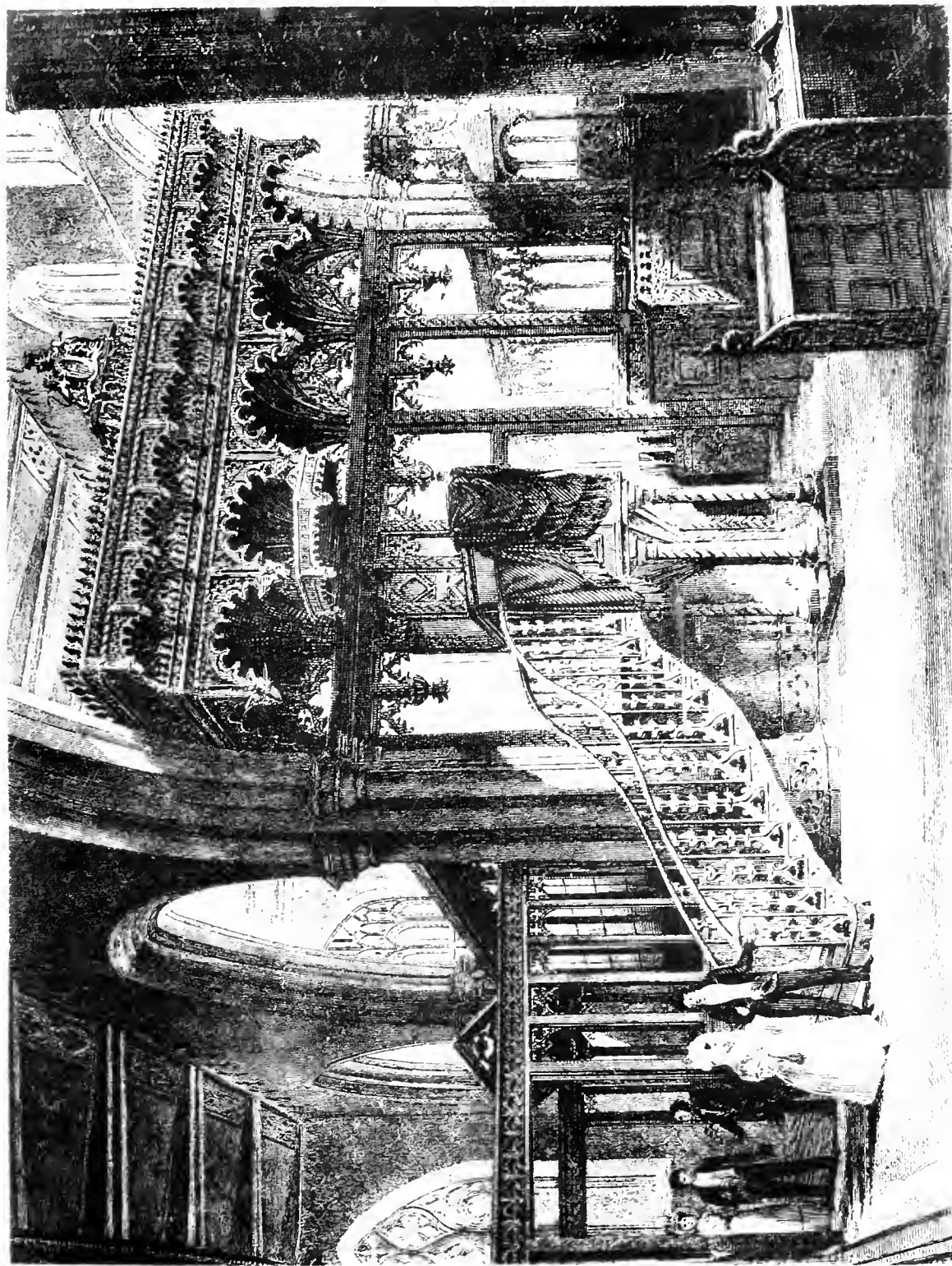
SOMERSET has lost all its Pre-Reformation roodlofts. Two or three appear to have been removed within living memory, including those of Kingsbrompton and Chedzoy. In several churches there are beautiful remains of panel work which probably once formed part of the rich balcony-fronts of the old lofts. But at least the splendid sub-structure of ribbed and traceried vaulting, with the manifold and delicate enrichments of the cornices is in many cases preserved to us, and for that we may be thankful. It would appear that the lofts were in many cases panelled with traceried compartments something like those we see in the base of the screens, but with rather greater richness of detail, and it is probable that many were decorated with a series of statuettes as at Yatton, or in less ambitious works, with paintings on the panels. But there is a very interesting point in the ecclesiology of the district, in the evidence that exists for the continuance of the use of the lofts after the Reformation as music galleries as at Minehead (*see note*) and their actual erection for this purpose in the time of the Laudian revival. (*See Post-Reformation, Section ante, p. 113.*)

Traces of some of the pre-Reformation appanages of the roodloft are fairly plentiful still. At High Ham we have a fine example of the rood-beam in its ancient position over the loft, and the stumps of rood and figures may yet be seen, whilst there are other instances remaining of the survival of the beam. Frequently too we find the enriched ceiling or "canopy of honour" in the eastern bay of the nave roof over the position of the rood, as at Ditchat. At North Cadbury the hooks for the rood, and for the "Velum Quadragesimale" or Lenten Veil (which hung in the arch over the screen for the forty days) are still existing—and in several cases the solid "tympanum" or boarded filling which in some of our churches was provided as a permanent substitute for this veil, is still standing—as at Raddington, and Trull: whilst Winsham provides us with an instance of a pre-Reformation tympanum having its surface painted with a representation of the Crucifixion. Of the "Doom," which was the customary painting in this position, Somerset provides no surviving specimen. There is one other painted tympanum, viz., that of Wyke Champflower, but that is Post-Reformation in date.

PAINTED SCREENS.—The county furnishes a fair number of instances of screenwork retaining mediæval colour decorations, but in no case so far as we are aware, do any painted figure-panels now survive, though it is stated that such have been discovered at Wellow and at St. Decuman's, or at least traces of them.

The following screens show colour decoration: Backwell, Banwell, Bishop's Lydeard, Carhampton, Chew Magna, Combe St. Nicholas, Long Ashton, Long Sutton, Minehead, Pawlett, Pilton, Raddington, Stockland Bristol, St. Decuman's, Wellow, and White Staunton.

POST-REFORMATION SCREENS. The county is singularly rich in Post-Reformation woodwork, and not only in screens, but in pulpits, pews, and other church fittings is this evident.



CANOPTED KODDSCHTEN

STEDEN - LANCAHIRE



There is a great deal of fine work dating from 1616 down to the end of Archbishop Laud's supremacy, and other work of an interesting nature but of a much later date is found at Croscombe, and in a few other places. The following is a list of screens, in some instances supporting lofts, which are of post-Reformation date: Bridgwater (Elizabethan), formerly supporting loft; Berrow, 1637, ditto; East Brent, 1635, ditto; Rodney Stoke, 1625, ditto; and at Bath Abbey, until the restoration under Scott in the middle of the nineteenth century, was a Post-Reformation screen and music gallery or organ loft, probably erected about the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Post-Reformation screens without lofts exist at Croscombe, 1616; Ditchat (remains), 1630; Keynsham, 1634; Low Ham, 1620; Bruton, 1620; Norton St. Philip, *c.* 1600 (debased Gothic); Countisbury, *c.* 1700; Isle Abbots; North Newton, 1626-28; Thurloxtton, same date; Crowcombe, *c.* 1728.

Of fine screenwork which has been broken up for the purpose of forming western gallery-fronts we have the following instances: Church Staunton, Chedzoy, East Pennard, Evercreech, and other galleries containing old work are to be found at East Brent, Banwell and Nettlecombe, whilst others were standing in 1873 at Durston, Wilton (Taunton) and Tolland.

The record of the destruction of screens in Somerset is a very serious one, and the comparatively recent date of the removal of screens in some instances reflects no great credit on the persons concerned. Amongst those removed may be mentioned the following—Bishop's Hull, since 1843; Blagdon, early nineteenth century; Brompton Ralph, *c.* 1880; Cannington (broken up), 1844; Chedzoy, 1843-4; Cleeve, since 1843; Church Staunton, early in the nineteenth century; Combe Florey, since 1844; Compton Martin, *c.* 1870; Combe St. Nicholas (last surviving part), since 1882; Creech St. Michael; Puxton, since 1844; Halse (North aisle part), 1843; Hill Farrence, 1857; King's Brompton, *c.* 1860; Luccombe, *c.* 1845; North sub Hampden (burnt), *c.* 1891; Quantoxhead West, 1857; Raddington (mutilated and doors removed), since 1844; Williton, about 1853; Enmore (removed) in the eighties; West Buckland, since 1873; Witham Friary, 1832; Wiveliscombe, 1828; Wootton Courtney, prior to 1850. Of others only the lower part of the screen has been retained; this is the case at Isle Abbots, Limington, Old Cleeve and Ruishton; in the two latter churches the remains are used as a panelling to the sanctuary.

In tracing the many interesting parallels found in the design of screens belonging to certain groups, and in the character especially of the small detail and carved enrichments applied to screenwork throughout this county and neighbouring districts, one is insensibly led to speculate upon the question—to what school or guild of carvers may these works be attributed. The strong family likeness between the screens of north-east Somerset (Group A 2) has been noted: also the striking character of the High Ham—Queen Camel group—and others, whilst there exists in the detail of the lower panels of the Dunster screen, and others in its neighbourhood a like similarity of design, remarkable in that it is not found in the sister county of Devon, although in other respects the work on these "Dunster" screens bears such a strong resemblance to those of Devon.

The design of these lower panels, which consists of a couple of short trefoiled panels under an ogee canopy, enriched with carved crockets and finial, is noteworthy, and we here reproduce it (Fig. 89). It is peculiar to the district, and may be traced in slight

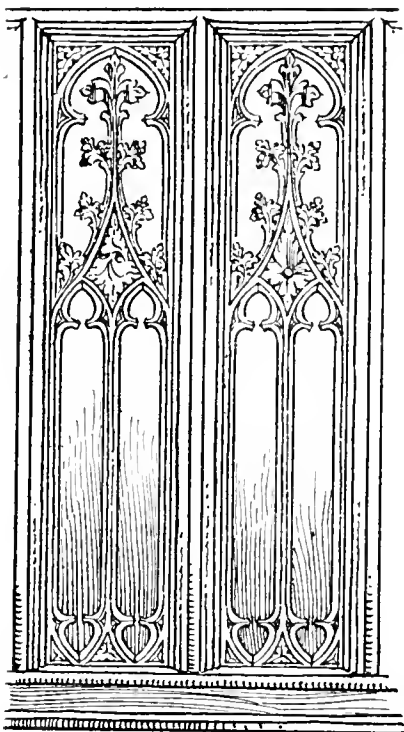


FIG. 89

forms at St. Decuman's, Bicknoller, and elsewhere in local screens which were probably erected at a somewhat later date, under the influence of the Dunster screen, as their prototype.<sup>1</sup>

In distinction to these, it will be observed that the lower panels of the screens at Timberscombe, Minehead, St. Audries, and others, exhibit a very different arrangement, and one which is common to Devonshire screens—namely, four flat panels, with tracery in the heads, and a row of quatrefoils at the foot. These points of detail may prove to have a practical value, as well as an interest, if they serve to furnish a means of tracing the origin of the work.

It is often the case that a screen is reputed to have come from some local monastery, and this is said of several screens in Devonshire, and of some in Somerset.<sup>2</sup> This does not necessarily imply that the work was removed from such and such an abbey or priory at the Dissolution, though this may be sometimes the case, as at Brushford, where we understand there is documentary evidence to show that the screen was removed from Barlinch Priory, but it is far more

likely, generally speaking, that this saying simply expresses a tradition that the screen in question was carved by the craftsmen, whether monks or lay brethren, attached to certain monasteries.

Thus in the case of Dunster, the evidence seems all in favour of the theory that such a school of woodcraft had existed in this monastery and has left its mark on the surrounding district.

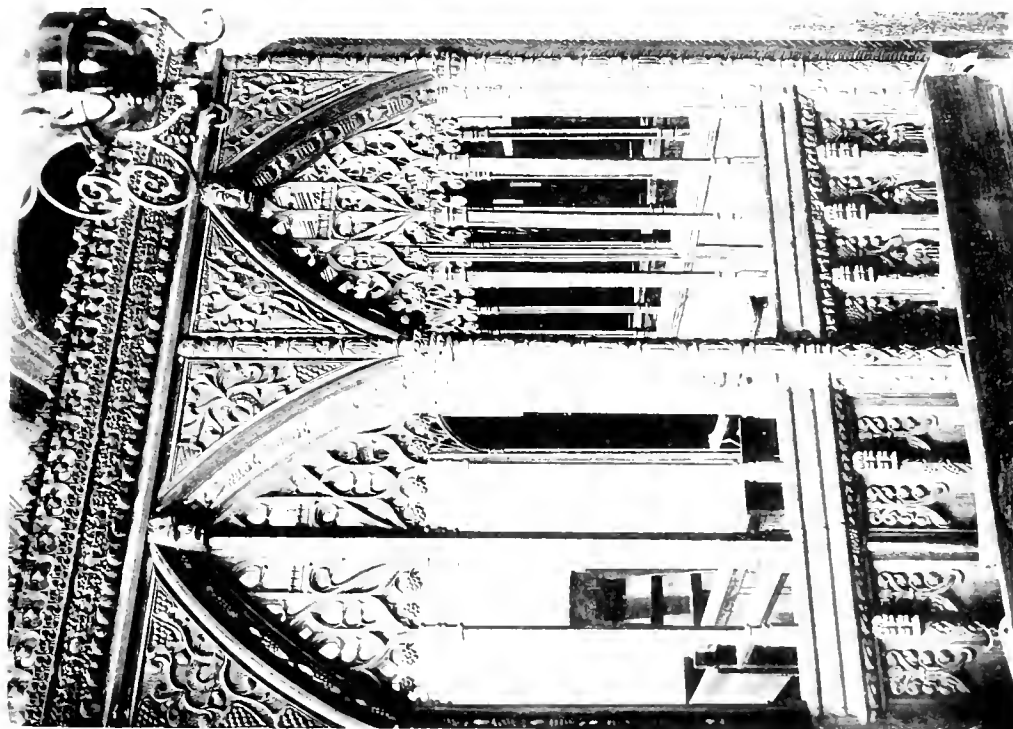
In earlier years, no doubt, most of the beautiful carvings which went to adorn our parish churches were produced within the walls of the monasteries, those cradles of art

<sup>1</sup> What we may call the Dunster *formula*, namely, this little arrangement of the twin lights under a canopy, is to be seen in some very early timber framework at the back of the Luttrell Arms Hotel. We also have it in a very graceful and delicate form in the screen which was formerly the altar-screen, or eastern enclosure, of the parochial part of the church at Dunster, now standing in the south transept (Plate LVII). This screen is of much earlier date than the nave-screen, probably not later than the close of the fourteenth century, and the feature in question is perhaps its leading ornament, being repeated in series above and below the transom-bars. This ornament has been faithfully copied on the late fifteenth century nave-screen.

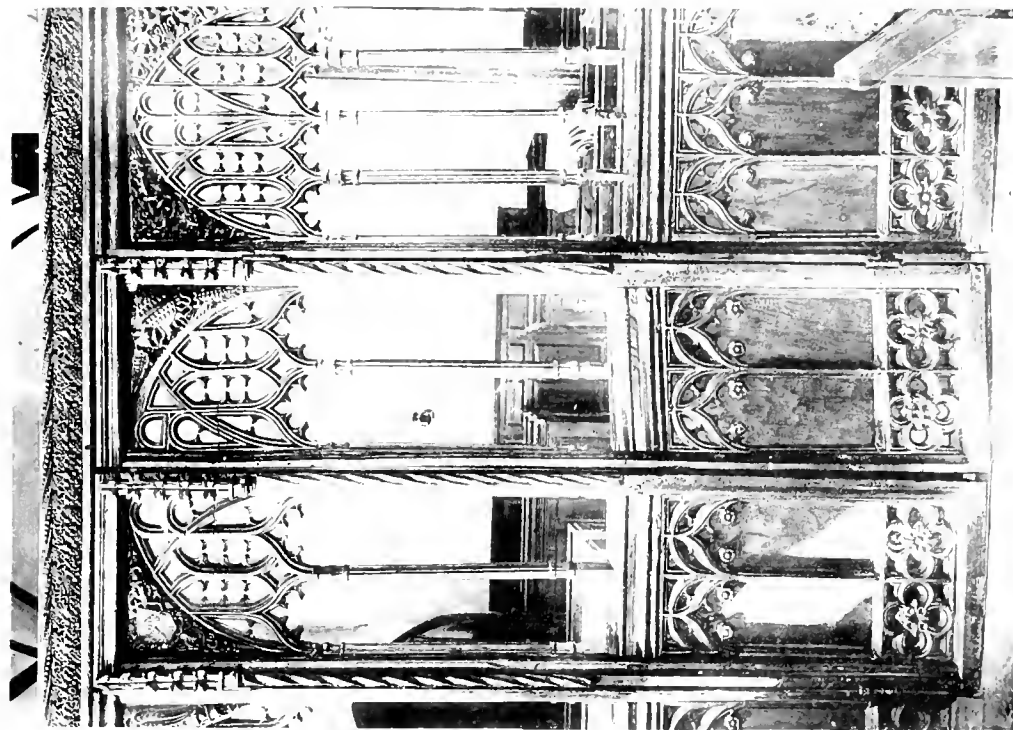
<sup>2</sup> As *e.g.*, W. Quantoxhead screen, from Cleeve; High Ham screen, from Glastonbury, etc., etc.

# PLATE XLVI

PERPETUATION OF ANCIENT FORMS IN THE POST-REFORMATION ERA



(A) POST-REFORMATION SCREEN (PROBABLY MARIAN)  
LESTLEIGH; DEVON



(B) LATE TUDOR SCREENWORK  
MONKLEIGH; DEVON





and science in troublous times—but with the diffusion of learning and the advent of more settled conditions in the times of the first Tudors, there is little doubt that a numerous class of lay craftsmen grew up and contributed in a large measure to supply the demand, which in those days must have been literally enormous, for carved work, sculpture, and what not.

The old parish accounts of Yatton, Croscombe, and Pilton seem to throw some light upon this question, as the employment of professional carvers, probably members of a free guild, is recorded.

In the churchwardens' accounts of Croscombe parish, we find that the whole of the work for Saint George's Chapel at Croscombe was carried out by the Freemasons of Exeter.

At Pilton all the carving of the roodscreen was done by an Exeter carver, and there is an item of 2s. 4d. in the account for the year 1521, representing the expenses incurred by the churchwarden in visiting Exeter to confer with the carver there.

The Yatton churchwardens' accounts are interesting. In 1447-8, three men were sent to Easton-in-Gordano where there was a fine "alure" or roodloft, to inspect this as a model for one which was contemplated for their own church. Others rode to Frome Selwood and to Bitton, presumably for the like purpose, and one, W. Stubbe, was sent to Bristol to view the "tabylment" or altar-sculpture.

In 1448 we find :

" Item. Pd. for the tabyl of the hye awter	.. .. .	xj marcs. xs.
" In costage of the same tabyl	.. .. .	xviij.
" For costage of 2 wings of ray silk for the hy auter	.. .. .	xviij.

(Cloths, wire, and rings, are also charged.)

" Item. for the Rodeloffte, to Crosse (the joiner)	.. .. .	viiij marcs. xiijs."
--	---------	----------------------

In 1450 :

" Item. Payd. to Crosse for the Rodeloffte	.. .. .	vjs. viij.
--	---------	------------

In 1451, " Payd. to Crosse for the aler (alure, <i>i.e.</i> , loft)	.. .. .	xxs."
---	---------	-------

" " anoder " payment for the aler	.. .. .	vj. viij.
-----------------------------------	---------	-----------

" " For the paynter ys here a wyke (week)	.. .. .	ij mares. iij.
---	---------	----------------

In 1454, Payd. Costage yn. settingt uppe of the aler, the first days	.. .. .	ijs. viij.
--	---------	------------

" " Payede for divers colers to the aler	.. .. .	vjs. vjd.
--	---------	-----------

" " For the paynter ys here a wyke (week)	.. .. .	xxd."
---	---------	-------

The accounts for this year include also the ceiling (syler, schylyng) boards carried from Southampton with drawings and colours for same, " the trussing of the Crosse with the Maryes, iij.

" Item. Iron to the Rodeloffte

" gold to paint the angell	.. .. .	vjs."
----------------------------	---------	-------

Etc., etc.

And in 1455 :

" Item. To Crosse 'ys ale' yn settingt uppe of the poste of the Rodeloffte	.. .. .	iiij.
--	---------	-------

" A crampe of iron in the Sowthe side of the soler	.. .. .	xij.
--	---------	------

" for a chandelier yn the Rodeloffte to Jenken, Smyth, of Comysbury	.. .. .	xiijs. iij.
---	---------	-------------

" for ale gebyn to Crosse yn certeyn tymis yn hys worke, to make hym wel wellde	.. .. .	ij.
---	---------	-----

" for earnest-peny to the image maker	.. .. .	jd.
---------------------------------------	---------	-----

" to settingt up of the ymages	.. .. .	iiij.
--------------------------------	---------	-------

" for the ymages to the Rodeloffte in number lxix	.. .. .	xiij xs. iij.
---	---------	---------------

1481—

" Item. For the closynge (parclose screens) betwyxte the churche and the chaunsell, etc., including nayles	.. .. .	xxd."
--	---------	-------

It is interesting to note that the images, sixty-nine in number, cost about a shilling apiece. That it should have been the practice to send so far as Exeter for a carver for the Pilton and Croscombe work is curious, and seems to point to the existence of a superior order of craftsmen in that city. History proverbially repeats itself. To-day it is again the practice of many to send to Exeter workshops for precisely this class of work, and often from a much greater distance !

An individual mention of each screen known to be existing in the county follows, and in addition to these it has been thought advisable to include a brief mention of other woodwork in the churches, as *e.g.*, pulpits and benches, where such seemed worthy of special remark.

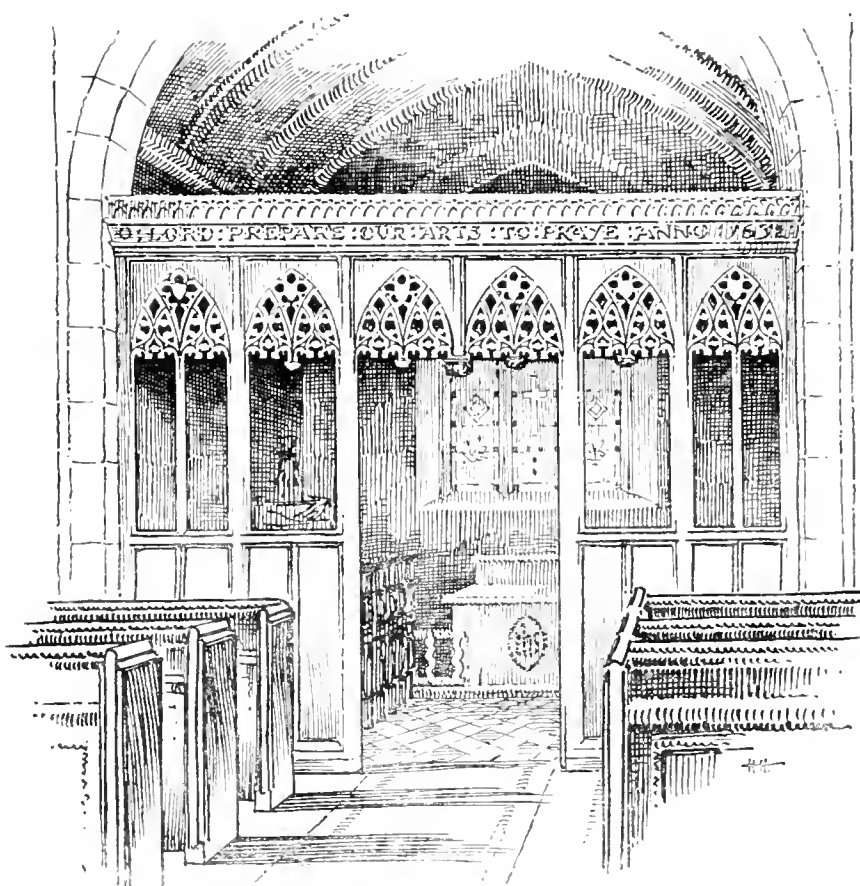
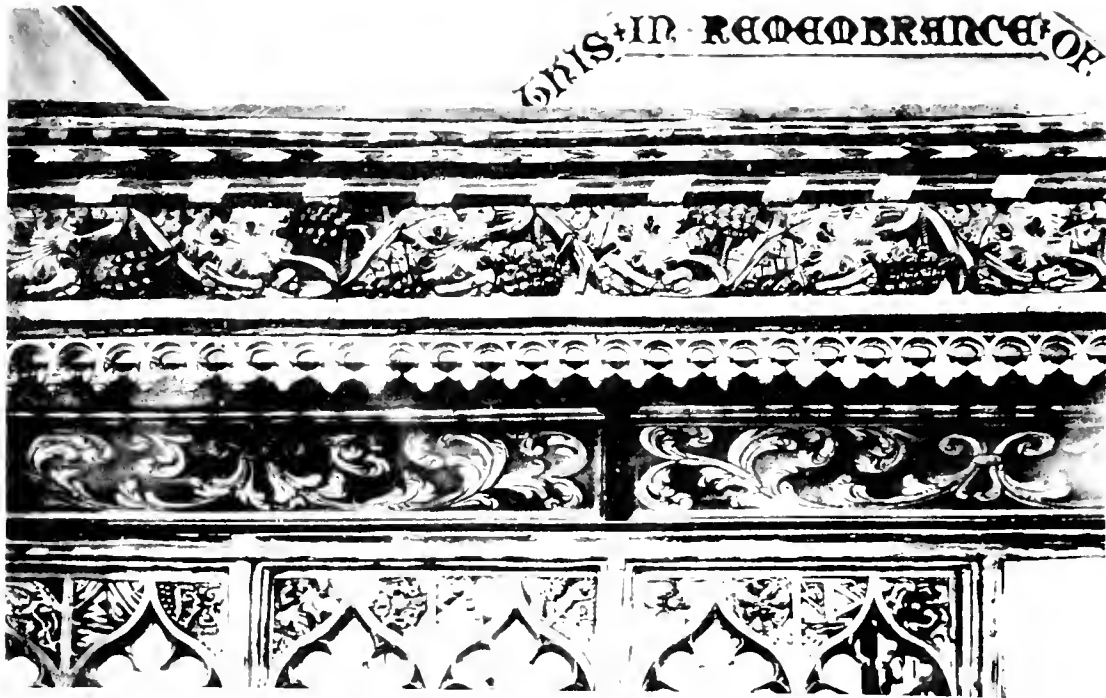


FIG. 90

PLATE XLVII  
PERPETUATION OF ANCIENT FORMS



(A) PRE-REFORMATION CORNICES: WILLAND: DEVON



(B) THEIR POST-REFORMATION COUNTERPART (1624)  
WASHFIELD: DEVON



## APPENDIX A

## LIST OF EXISTING ROODSCREENS

ALFORD.	LOXTON.
BACKWELL.	LYDEARD ST. LAWRENCE.
BANWELL.	MEARE (2).
BICKNOLLER.	MIDDLEZOY.
BISHOP'S LYDEARD.	MILBORNE PORT.
BRENT, EAST (Post-Reformation, with gallery, now at West end).	MINEHEAD.
BRIDGWATER.	NORTH NEWTON (Post-Reformation, seventeenth century).
BRUSHFORD.	NORTON FITZWARREN.
BRYMPTON D'EVERCY (stone).	NUNNEY.
CANNINGTON (imperfect).	NYNEHEAD.
CARHAMPTON.	OTTERHAMPTON.
CHEDDAR (aisle portions).	PENNARD, WEST.
CHEW MAGNA.	PILTON (at N. Cheriton).
CHILTON CANTELO.	PORTBURY (part, now in tower).
COMBE ST. NICHOLAS (parts).	PRIDDY.
CONGRESBURY.	QUANTOXHEAD, EAST.
CROSCOMBE (Post-Reformation, seventeenth century).	" WEST (taken apart).
CROWCOMBE (Post-Reformation, eighteenth century).	QUEEN CAMEL.
CUCKLINGTON.	RADDINGTON.
CULBONE.	RODNEY STOKE (Post-Reformation, with gallery).
CURRY RIVEL (aisle parts).	ST. DECUMAN'S.
DONYATT (part).	STAPLE FITZPAINE (2), (parts).
DUNSTER.	STOCKLAND BRISTOL.
ELWORTHY (Fig. 90).	THURLOXTON (Post-Reformation, seventeenth century).
ENMORE (at Huish Epi.).	TIMBERSCOMBE.
FITZHEAD.	TRENT.
HALSE.	TRULL.
HIGH HAM.	WELLOW.
ISLE ABBOTS (lower part).	WESTON-IN-GORDANO.
KEYNSHAM (S. aisle part).	WELLS CATHEDRAL.
KINGSBURY EPISCOPI.	WHITCHURCH (aisle screen).
LIMINGTON (lower part).	WHITESTAUNTON (mutilated).
LONG ASHTON.	WINSHAM.
LONG SUTTON.	WRINGTON.
LOW HAM (Post-Reformation, seventeenth century).	WITHYCOMBE.

## APPENDIX B

## PARCLOUSE, TOWER, AND CHANTRY-SCREENS, ETC.

BACKWELL (stone).	MEARE (3).
BATH (Prior Bird's Chantry).	MELLS.
BLACKMORE CHAPEL.	MONKSILVER (now a chancel screen).
BRIDGWATER (Post-Reformation).	NORTON FITZWARREN.
BRUTON (Post-Reformation).	NORTON ST. PHILIP (2).
COMPTON MARTIN.	PILTON.
CONGRESBURY.	PURITON.
CROSCOMBE (2).	STOKE SUB HAMDON (stone).
CROWCOMBE.	THORN ST. MARGARET.
DUNSTER.	TRULL (2).
ISLE ABBOTS (Post-Reformation).	WELLOW (painted).
KEYNSHAM ..	WELLS CATHEDRAL (several).
KILMERSDON (stone).	WHITCHURCH.
MARK (Post-Reformation).	WHITESTAUNTON (stone).
MARSTON MAGNA.	

## APPENDIX C

## FRAGMENTS

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| BERROW (Post-Reformation, formerly supporting loft). | KILVE.               |
| BISHOP'S HULL.                                       | LUCCOMBE.            |
| BLAGDON.   | MELLS.               |
| BROCKLEY.  | MILVERTON.           |
| BROMPTON RALPH (Fig. 91).                            | NETTLECOMBE.         |
| BRUTON (panels in Post-Reformation tower-screen).    | OLD CLEEVE.          |
| CASTLE CARY (R. S.).                                 | PENNARD, EAST.       |
| CANNINGTON (parcloses).                              | PUNTON (base).       |
| CHEDZOY.   | RUISHTON.            |
| COMPTON DUNDON (base).                               | SELWORTHY.           |
| CONGRESBURY.   | SHEPTON MALLET.      |
| DITCHEAT.  | SOMERTON.            |
| Do. (Post-Reformation).                              | SPAXTON.             |
| EVERCREECH.  | STOGUMBER.           |
| GLASTONBURY ST. JOHN.                                | TAUNTON ST. JAMES.   |
| HILLFARRENCE.  | WEST HATCH.          |
| ISLE ABBOTS.   | WELLS, ST. CUTHBERT. |
| KILTON.  | WILLITON.            |
|  | WIVELISCOMBE.        |

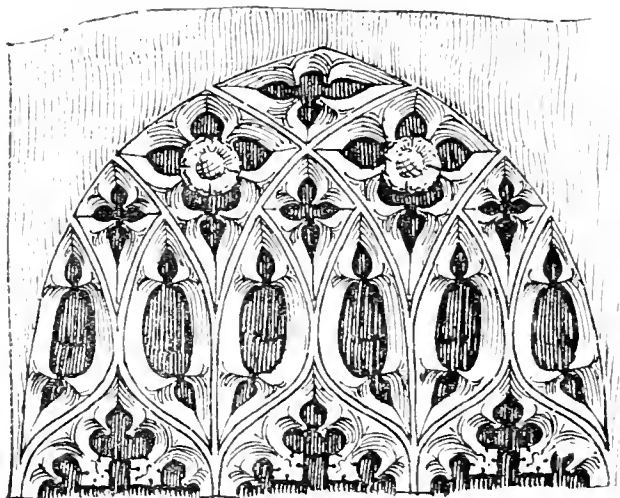
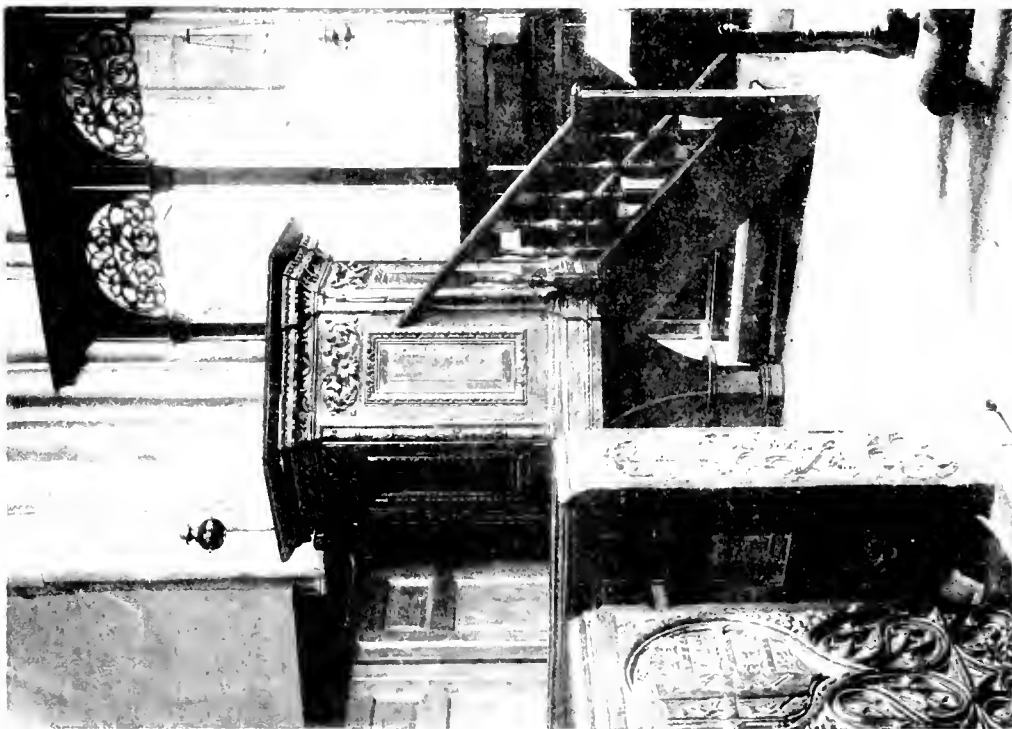
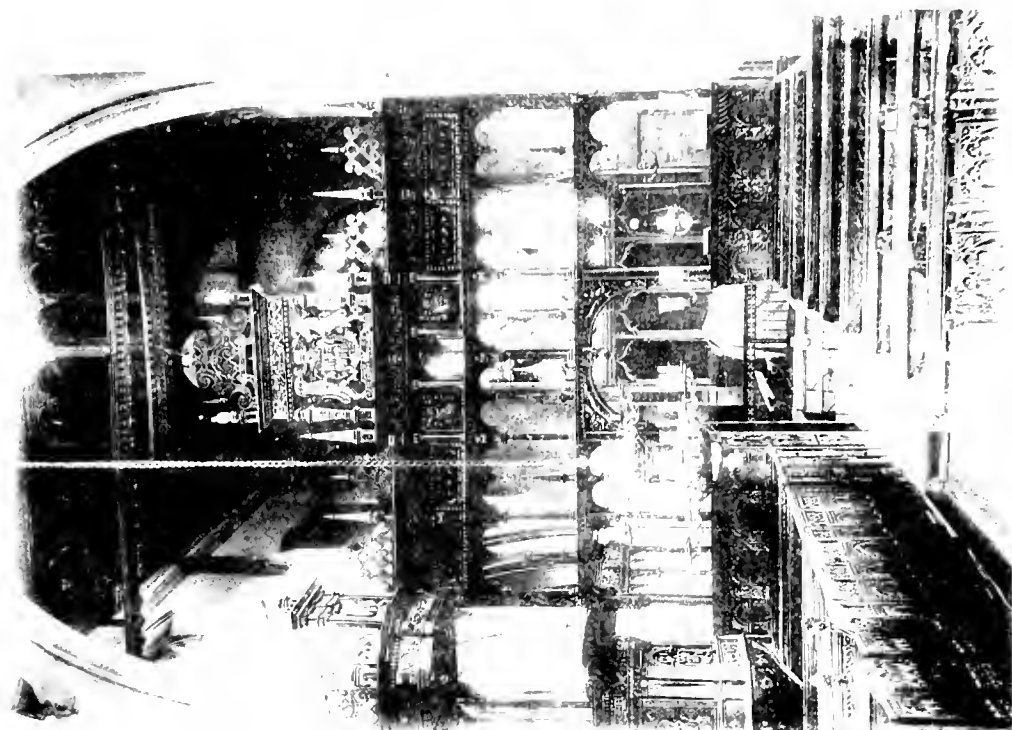


FIG. 91

PLATE XLVIII  
POST-REFORMATION SCREENWORK



(B) CHANCEL SCREEN AND PULPIT: CROWCOMBE: SOMERSET  
(Temp. 1728)



(A) CHANCEL SCREEN: CROSCOMBE: SOMERSET  
(Temp. 1616)





# SCREENS IN SOMERSET CHURCHES

## DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THOSE SURVIVING AND RECORDED

*With some further Ecclesiological Notes*

**ALFORD (All Saints).** This little church is rich in ancient woodwork, well and reverently preserved.

The chancel screen is of singular character, entirely unlike anything else in the county, and more reminiscent in its proportions of the screens at Brigstock (Northants) or Walsoken. It is immensely high for the church, so high, in fact, as to make it a matter of doubt whether it could ever have been intended for its present position. Nor has it the appearance of a roodloft screen, but rather that of a stately parclose, suited to a transeptal aisle-arch in some large conventual building. We give an illustration (Fig. 92).

From these indications and the proximity of the parish to the abbeys of Glastonbury and Bruton it may not unreasonably be held that this screen is the spoil of one or other of these dissolved houses—probably Glastonbury once owned it.

The screen is square-headed, there being on each side of the central bay three rectangular divisions filled with tracery of an early type—probably dating from the commencement of the fifteenth century. These rectangular lights, which are of great height, are divided in their height by two transom bars, the lower a mere tracery bar, connected with the upper by a series of vertical divisions giving six little lights, with trefoiled archlets in the heads under the major transom.

Above the major transom is more tracery, the space here being divided into three lights, and breaking into a close reticulation of curvilinear type.

The doorhead has segmental curves, and the spandrels are finely carved. Above it are three two-light divisions of the framing, each containing good tracery of the same type. The cornice enrichments are missing, exhibiting a large casement moulding in which the vine-leaf once ran.

The church boasts of a magnificent Jacobean pulpit of black oak, carved all over, with its canopy-back against wall, to match—the tester, or canopy, however, missing, which is a great pity. There is an arched recess in the wall behind the pulpit (on the north side of the chancel arch) which before its alteration probably marked the position of the roodloft stair.

The bench-ends in this church are admirable specimens of early fifteenth century work, finely wrought, with elaborate sunk tracery panels, their vigorously-moulded sides being carried up with tall curved shoulders having a hollow sweep to hexagonally-mitred poppy-heads. The chancel-stalls are worthy of note. A screen has within recent years been placed in the tower arch. It is a good example of modern work, and well suited to its place.

The bench-ends have a similar outline to those of North Cadbury, which show foreign influence. Those at Alford are quite English, and better cut than the Cadbury ones.

James Fitz James was Rector of North Cadbury, 1521-41, whilst John, his brother, was Lord of the Manor of Alford. The date of the Cadbury benches is 1538-40.<sup>1</sup> (See NORTH CADBURY.)

<sup>1</sup> *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXVI, p. 56.

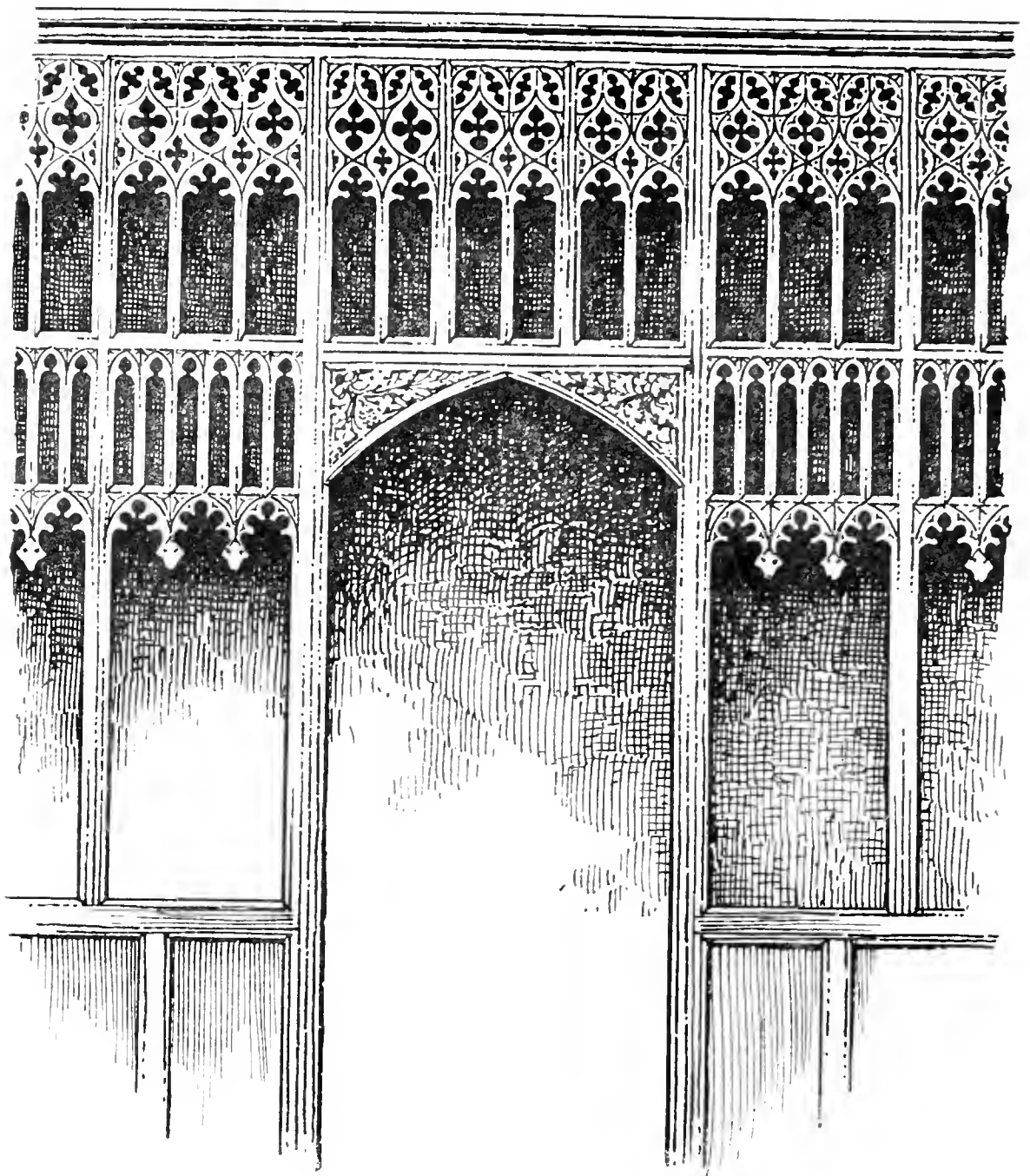
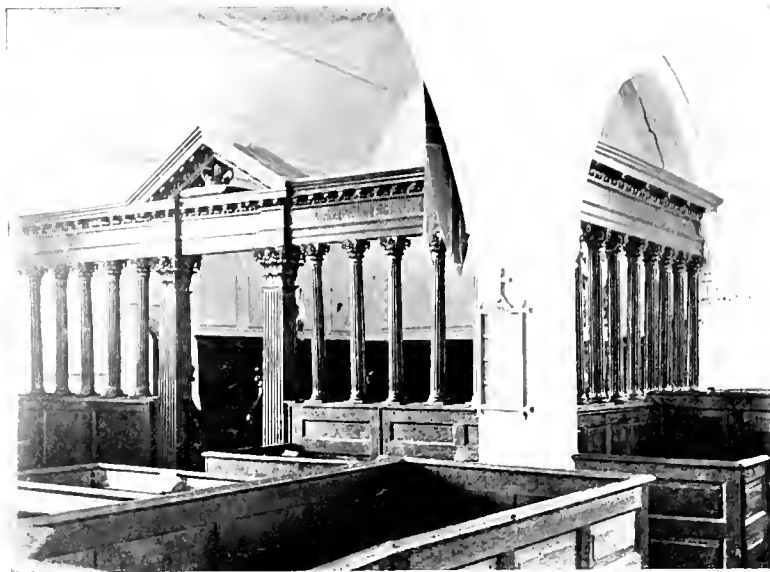


FIG. 92

## PLATE XLIX

POST-REFORMATION SCREENS. (LATE XVIII CENTURY)



(A) CHANCEL SCREEN AND PARCLOSE, CRUWYS MORCHARD, DEVON



(B) CHANCEL SCREEN, ERMINGTON



**ASHILL (St. Mary).** This church is remarkable for the possession of a triple chancel arch of Norman date—a feature almost unique in the county of Somerset.

**ASHTON : LONG.** (*See LONG ASHTON.*)

**AXBRIDGE (St. John Baptist).** The roodscreen and other screenwork was broken up and turned out of the church a very long time ago, and from time to time fragments of the old carvings have been heard of in the hands of local people, among whom they seem to have been distributed—but no trace can now be found of them.

This church originally seems to have possessed two screens, both of which had lofts. There are two separate staircases, one considerably to the westward of the other. The eastern one is just east of the central tower, on the N. side, and access is gained to it from the N. chapel; the other is in the south-aisle wall.

Similar arrangements may be noted at Wedmore, Clevedon, Crewkerne, and in other cruciform churches, but the loss of the screens themselves makes it a matter of doubt as to what precise form they took—whether, for example, they had separate lofts as at Edington, Wilts, or whether the loft overran the whole depth between the screens, forming a deep floor, as at Winsham.

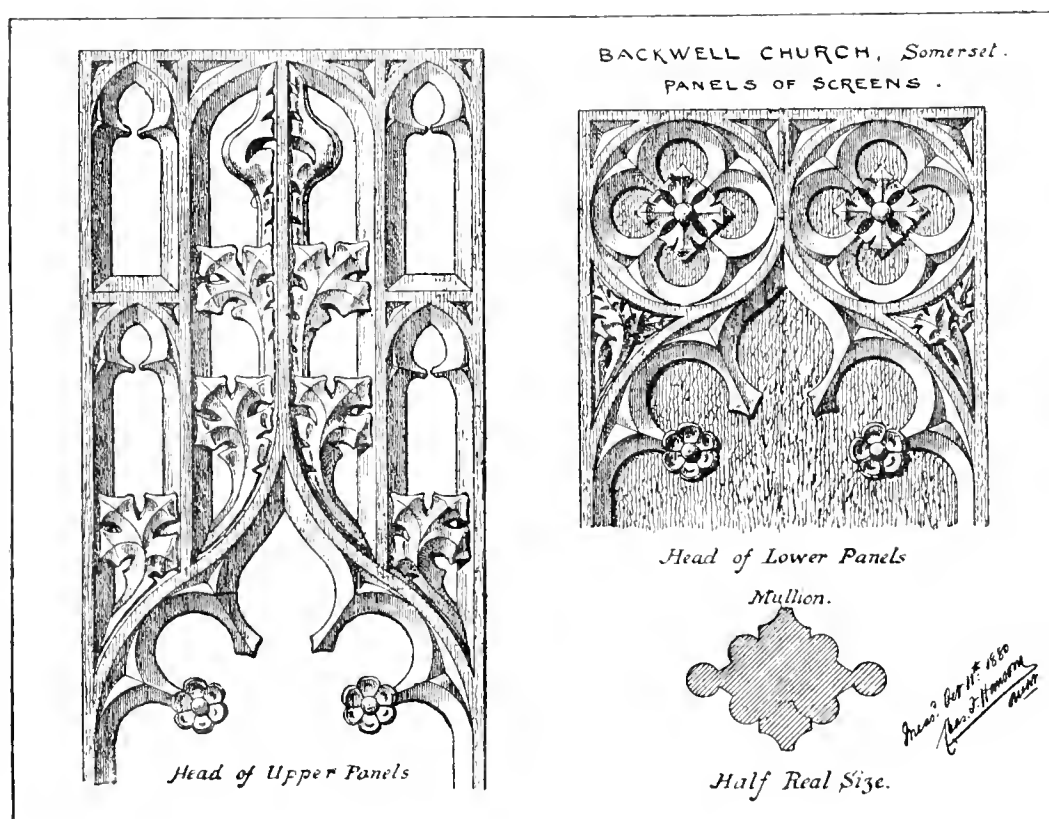


FIG. 93

**BACKWELL (St. Andrew).** The screens remain to nave and both aisles. Though practically uniform in character, the three sections are separate, though whether this was originally the case is perhaps doubtful. They are at present placed within the thickness of the arches.

The central section is of three main divisions, those on north and south extremities being of five lights each (the usual narrow rectangular lights, with tracery heads as per diagram Figs. 86, 93). The cornice retains two rows of very beautiful vine-leaf enrichment, showing coloured decoration. The convex profile of this ornament gives it a very rich appearance. We find the same convexity, with equally good result, at Congresbury and Keynsham. The doors remain, with finely carved head, very like that of Wellow—and the lower panels exhibit the same similarity.

The south-aisle screen seems the same in most respects as the centre, and is uniform in elevation, but the north-aisle section appears to be about a foot higher.

The chancel piers, which are flat on their west face, each contain a small rectangular hagioscope symmetrically placed. Carved heads are built into the wall above them as corbels at the level of the roodloft, for support of the beams.

On the south side of nave, just under the roof by the chancel wall, is a two-light window for the illumination of the loft, which would otherwise have been very much in the dark, as there is no clerestory to this lofty nave.

There is also a small stone screen in the church. The pulpit is modern and fairly good ; the benches poor.

**BANWELL (St. Andrew).** (Plates LIVA and LXVIIA.) The roodscreen is a very fine late Perpendicular work, having been erected in 1522.

It is of seven bays, spanning the nave, and is of tall and stately proportions, supporting a wide loft. The openings are arcaded, with very pointed heads, filled with fine Perpendicular tracery, each opening divided centrally by a stout vertical member running into the head, and again subdivided by lesser mullions, making four lights to each bay. The fan-vaulting, perfect on both sides, exhibits a singular grace of character, from the large number of ribs, there being seven free ribs to each fan. The whole screen retains its ancient colour, which was faithfully restored in 1821.

The cornice on the west side strikes the eye on account of its extraordinary depth and richness.

There are no less than five bands of enrichment, divided by beads, in addition to which there are crestings above and below, the upper cresting being a very tall one. The central band of courant vine is of remarkable size and character, showing the usual sinuous stem interwoven with huge elongated leaves, the smaller interstices being filled with bunches of grapes, and twisted tendrils (compare the similar member at Atherington). The cornices on the east side are also good, though less complex ; the two deep bands of running ornament present a marked and pleasing contrast of character, whilst the inverted cresting below is original and effective.

The access to the roodloft is by a staircase in the north-east angle of the nave wall. Nothing now remains of the gallery of the roodloft, but Rutter says that in 1829, " the oak panelling and railing " remained above the cornice on the side towards the nave. The peculiar depth of the western cornices, which appear to form a double tier, rather suggests the idea that the ornamental beam, with its cresting, which in the old days formed the head of the gallery-framing, may in this, as in so many other cases, have been brought down and laid upon the top of the cornice beam on the removal of the roodloft. The loft in this church must have been a glorious thing. In the mind's eye it may be pictured—a row of statuettes or bas reliefs, in delicately canopied niches, all aglow with gold and colour, standing perhaps five feet or so above the cornices. The splendid proportions of the chancel arch were obviously designed for a great

## PLATE L

### ORGANS UPON THE ROODLOFT



The plate shows this ancient custom revived at LONG SUTTON CHURCH,  
SOMERSET. The same has been done at St. Ives, Hunts ; Coton,  
Cambs., and elsewhere.





display here. At the apex of the arch still remains the sculptured angel which bore the chain from which depended the holy rood; and the position of the beam on which it rested is defined clearly for future restorers by the "angel" corbels built into the sides of the arch just above the springing, and about eight feet clear of the roodloft floor. The arrangement may readily be realised on reference to Meare Church, Wilts, where a complete parallel is visible. At Banwell may also be seen at the apex of the chancel arch, the figure of an angel holding a papal tiara from which depended the chain which supported the head of the great rood.

There is a screen at the west end of the church, of fairly good modern work, supporting a gallery front of Elizabethan date (1590), formerly part of a pew set up by Bishop Godwin—which is a fairly good example of work of that date, and formerly stood to the westward of the chancel screen on the south side. The Bishop was Lord of the Manor. He had no rights as an ecclesiastical dignitary in the church, but attended in his secular capacity.

The churchwardens' accounts are very complete, and give a good deal of information as to the roodscreen and its erection. The following are extracts:

1521. "Pd. for a paper to draw the draft of ye rode-lofte .. .. . iiijd.  
for the making of the Endentur and the oblygacyon for the Kervar .. js viijd."
1522. "Pd. to the Kervar at Willa Jervy's house .. .. . £23  
for Brede and Ale for men to take downe ye Rodelofte .. .. . 9d."  
(i.e., the older roodloft, which this one replaced.)
1525. "Pd. to Robert Hopton for gylting in ye Rodelofte, and for stayning of the  
clothe afore the Rodelofte .. .. . £5"
1531. The "Rode" was sold for the value of 65 bushels of wheat (about £3), and taken to Uphill for shipment. This was probably the older rood, superseded by the new work.

The cost of the Banwell roodloft would be something like £460 of our money, which enables one to form some idea of the estimation in which the "Rodelofte" was held in the Middle Ages.

There was an organ upon the loft, as was generally the case. It stood at the foot of the High Cross, where it remained until its final removal in the last century (*vide* Rutter). In the parish accounts we have the following entry:

"Pd. for mending of the belys of ye organs .. .. . 4d."

In the south porch, over the inner door, was formerly a gallery similar to those at Weston-in-Gordano, Portishead, etc., etc. The roodscreen lights were, in the early part of the nineteenth century, filled with stained glass. This church, in addition to its screenwork, also retains the enriched cornice which formed the head of the old choir-stall backs. Stalls and back panelling are gone, but the church retains its old benches, with a fine series of poppy-heads. The roofs are also very good examples of late fifteenth century work. The pulpit is of stone, an interesting relic of mediæval days, and one of a notable Somerset series. The Banwell roodloft was used until quite recent days as a singers' gallery; the choir and musicians being located there. The verger (1905) remembers the barrel organ which stood upon the loft.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, II, ii, 41, and i, 18; *ibid.*, III, ii, 18; *ibid.*, XV, i, 39; *ibid.*, XXXI, p. 41 (1885); *ibid.*, LI, p. 74-75 (1905); *ibid.*, LII, p. 72; Rutter's "Somerset," pp. 140-142; *Bris. & Glos. Arch. Soc. Proc.*, 1903, p. 23 (photos); *Ecclesiologist*, III, p. 27; "S. Kensington List of painted Screens."

**BATH ABBEY.** There was never a roodscreen properly so called here, for the Abbey Church was not completed when the Reformation supervened, and the nave was therefore from the first used for the reformed worship. But a screen with an organ-loft over it stood across the chancel-opening until after the middle of the nineteenth century, and fortunately a drawing of this is preserved. It is a most interesting instance of the perpetuation of Pre-Reformation

forms. The date of its erection has not been ascertained. It may be compared to the pulpitum of St. Mary's, Oxford, erected about 1820, and still standing.

The Abbey contains a very beautiful oak parcloze designed by Mr. J. O. Scott, F.R.I.B.A., and erected in 1885 to the memory of a late rector, Rev. Charles Kemble.

*Builder*, Apr. 24th, 1886 (illustration of Kemble Memorial Screen).

Of old screenwork the Abbey can boast of one very beautiful specimen—Prior Bird's chantry on the south side of the choir. This is a glorious piece of late Tudor work, extremely delicate in detail.

There is no old wood screenwork now remaining in the Abbey. The benches are modern, and very good, with richly-carved ends, but they are too crowded.

**BERROW.** This is one of the churches in which a Post-Reformation chancel screen and minstrels' gallery over, are known to have existed. (See S. BRENT and RODNEY STOKE.)

The screen was cleared away not very many years ago, and the framework, or portions of it, are preserved in the church, attached to the wall of the tower. Upon the beam is carved the legend: "I was set upright and even: In the year 1637: He is of the Lord accurst: Who in his dealings is not just," with the names of the churchwardens responsible for the work. There is nothing remarkable in the detail. The beam rested on turned shafts, but the mouldings were simple, and there is no evidence of any enrichments.

**BICKNOLLER (St. George).** The roodscreen is standing in the nave, but the north-aisle section has been removed. The surviving portion comprises five divisions, and retains its doors.<sup>1</sup>

This is one of the fan-vaulted screens of the Dunster series dating from about 1500. The proportions of the screen are pleasing, the vaulting being perfect and excellent in contour, the fillings traceried with simple intermediate rib, and cusped tracery fork to archlet in head with carving in lozenge and spandrels similar to that of the St. Audries' screen (West Quantoxhead).

The tracery of the arcaded lights follows the usual Perpendicular pattern. The lower panels of the screen are the same as those at Dunster. The cornices are very good, and consist of four rows of enrichments on the west side divided in the customary West-Country manner by single beads, and finished with crestings above and below. The top row of ornament is unfortunately missing. The screen has been renovated, none too well, and is rather loosely held together in parts.

The church is famous for its carved bench-ends, which are superb.

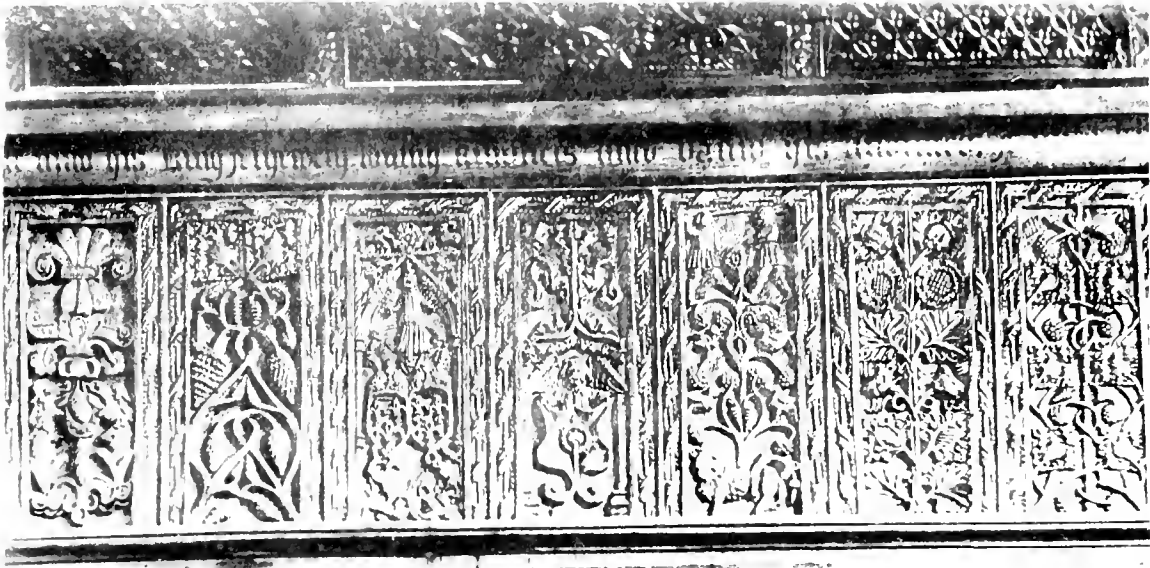
Camden Soc., "Hints to Church Builders," 1842, 2nd Edn.; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, III, pp. 63, 68; *Ecclesiologist*, III, p. 162.

**BISHOP'S LYDEARD (St. Mary).** This fine church possesses many attractions for the antiquary.

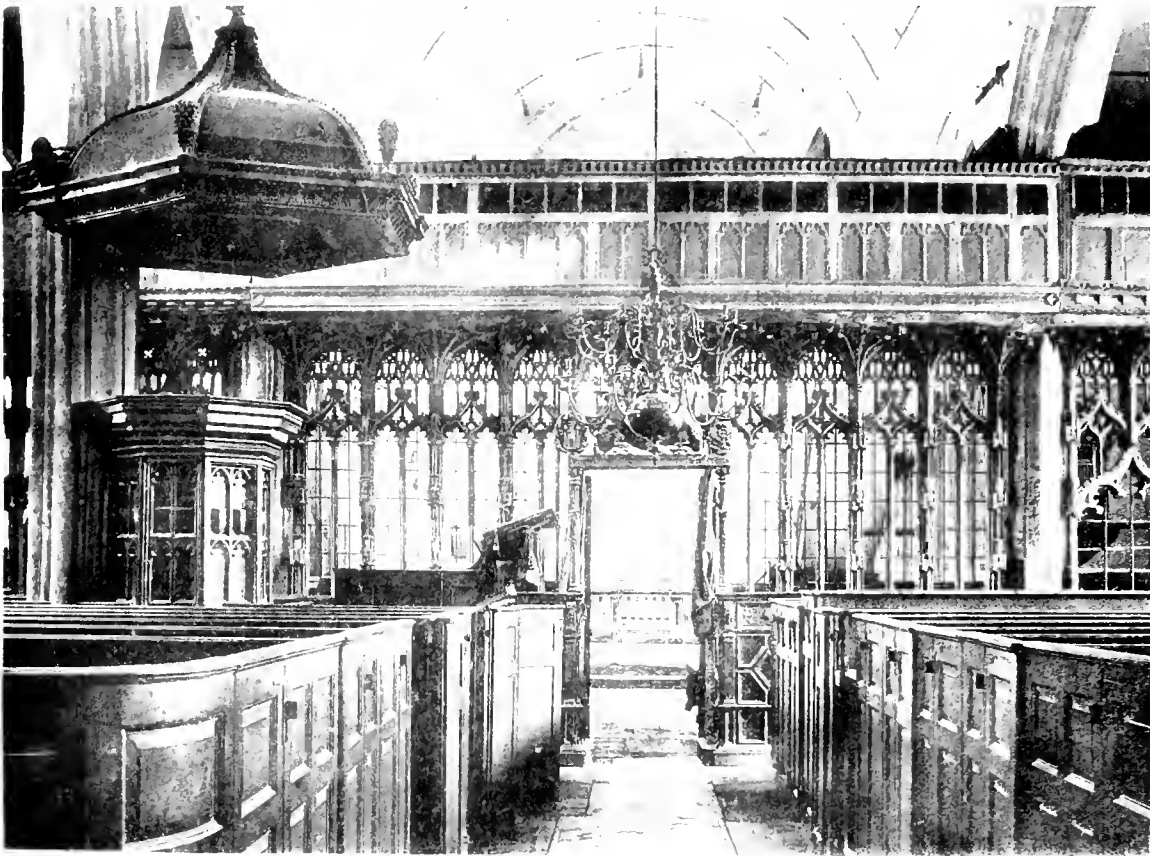
Its roodscreen is perfect, and Perpendicular in character, being one of the fan-vaulted screens of the true West-Country model (Plate LVIII A). It spans the nave and south aisle, the vaulting encircling the pier. To the nave are five bays, with doorway in centre. The tracery of the lights is rather stouter than the average, and the mullions have no little moulded caps or bands but run down without a break. In this respect the detail corresponds to that of early fifteenth century models such as those of Halberton or Uffculme (1420). The panels in the lower part of the screen are of singular beauty, traceried with a delicate network of late Gothic forms,

<sup>1</sup> Bicknoller screen is mentioned as one of four divisions in the Camden Society's 1842 publications (this implying, in their system of classification, that there would be nine bays altogether—four on each side of the central one). This would suggest that the aisle-section was standing in those days. The screen is also referred to in their book as "having a magnificent roodloft."

PLATE LI



(A) POST-REFORMATION GALLERY AT WEST END OF CHURCH  
CHURCHSTANTON: SOMERSET



(B) ROODSCREEN, WITH MODERN GALLERY AND PEWS IN THE PLACE OF THE ROOD-LOFT  
TOTNES: DEVON



very Flemish or French in feeling, and probably the work of foreign carvers. They are akin to those at Wiveliscombe and Lydeard St. Lawrence. (See note on WIVELISCOMBE.)

Upon the fillings of the fan-vaulting appear embossed stars, as at Norton Fitzwarren. These are gilt, on a blue ground. The cornices are complete, fine, and of unusual interest. On the west side are no less than five bands of enrichment, varying much in width and character. The central band in the series carries the Creed in Latin, in Gothic lettering, and, doubtless designedly, the words "passus sub Pontio Pilato, crucifixus et mortuus" come immediately below the rood.

The other cornice enrichments include a narrow and a broad belt of vine-leaf, one row of pateræ, of alternating design, long, rectangular, and square, and another band of foliage, possibly meant for the "water crowfoot," with sinuous stem, under which comes the pretty little inverted cresting. All the members are divided by plain beads, after the Devonshire manner.

The whole screen retains its ancient colour decoration, being brilliantly gilded and illuminated. The effect is very fine. The date of the work, if judged by the character of the lower panels, would hardly be earlier than 1500. The last bay of the nave roof is finely decorated with carved work and colour as a canopy of honour to the rood.

The roodloft stair remains with its two doorways. Until about the middle of the nineteenth century the loft was used, and fitted with pews; and there was a plaster back, or tympanic partition filling the chancel arch, which is here widened to the utmost, as we so often find it in Somerset to harmonise with West Country ideals of church interiors.

(*Vide* ST. JOHN, GLASTONBURY; ST. MARY, TAUNTON; CHEW-MAGNA, etc., etc.)

In 1873 a beautiful parcloze screen divided the choir from the chapel, but whether this is still in existence, has not been ascertained. It has been removed from the church.

The church also contains a magnificent series of old carved bench-ends, of late Perpendicular, and a Jacobean oak pulpit which is certainly one of the finest in the county. It is encrusted with carving, and stands upon an octagonal stone base.

*Ecclesiologist*, III, p. 30; Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 28; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, II, ii, p. 49; *ibid.*, III, ii, p. 58; Camden Soc., "Hints to Church Builders," 1842.

**BLACKMORE (CHAPEL).** The chapel of Blackmore Manor House preserves a good and perfect example of an early sixteenth century manorial chapel—the west portion divided into two floors, the upper floor or gallery communicating with the principal rooms, the lower being for the domestics, screened from the east part, which is carried for the full height of the chapel for the altar and officiating priest.

An instance of this arrangement may be seen in the chapel which stands in the village street at East Hendred, Berks, and another is provided at Bowringslea, S. Devon, where the beautiful old screen from S. Huish is utilised, in two tiers, in the same position.

**BISHOP'S HULL.** The roodscreen, which was standing in the early part of the nineteenth century carried on its cornice the Creed in raised gilt letters, as at Bishop's Lydeard. The church still contains a good deal of carved woodwork. Jeboult mentions a panelled altar screen, and a pulpit constructed of old carvings. There are also some remains of bench-ends, one representing the Resurrection.

(Rev. J. M. Neale's "Symbolism of Durandus, ciii," 1843.) *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XVIII, p. 46; Jeboult, "West Somerset," II, p. 25.

**BLAGDON.** The body of the church is a modern barn; the old church contained a screen of which some fragments exist, or until recently existed at Aldwick Court. An old churchwarden who died some years ago, aged 93, remembered Mr. Wills of Aldwick bringing his trap and fetching away the carvings of the old screen for his house. There is certainly some old

work there still, but its origin seems a little doubtful. There are a few good remains of screenwork nailed on to a wall in the grounds; also eight very interesting and well-carved "miserere" seats. The original source of this work is unknown, but tradition states that it was brought from Worspring Priory. Quite recently an announcement has been made of the discovery and intended restoration of the roodscreen of Blagdon Church. At the time of going to press we are unable to obtain particulars.

Communicated by J. Allen Bartlett, who has some measured sketches of screenwork.

**BRADFORD.** (See note on WELLINGTON; also *Som. Arch. Proc.* XXXVIII, p. 23.) The chancel arch is cut clear away on the face, for reception of a late screen and loft, now destroyed. Mr. Easton, the late Vicar (*ob. act.* 98) remembered the screen in a barn in the village.

**BRENT, EAST (St. Mary).** This church until recent years furnished an example of the perpetuation of an old Pre-Reformation feature in Stuart times. A screen of open character traversed the chancel arch, and upon it stood a gallery for choir and organist, with panelled front. On the rebuilding of the chancel in recent years, this gallery was removed bodily to the west end of the church, where it now stands, but much of the work has been renewed. It bears the date 1635, with the names of William Morrish and Nicholas Isgarr, Churchwardens. The loft has a square projecting bay of large size for the reception of the organ. Berrow was probably similar in design.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, LI, p. 42.

**BRIDGWATER (St. Mary).** The old roodscreen was a very massive work of comparatively early date (1420). It was removed some years since, and the two wings utilised as parclose screens (Plate LVA). The old arrangement, subsisting until a recent period, was remarkable, as in addition to the roodscreen, and about six or eight feet in front of it, a second screen, of Elizabethan date, spanned the chancel threshold. The corporation seats appear at this date to have been placed between these screens, in the form of stalls.

In an old number of the *Archæological Journal* is a plan of the church as it was, showing the screens in line right across nave and aisles, also a woodcut showing the effect of the view from the porch through the fenestration in the wall there, on through the N. Chapel, and the hagioscope in the north transept wall, through the north-aisle screen, into the chancel beyond—with a dotted line on plan showing the direction of the view.

The two sections of the old roodscreen are of unusual character, consisting of a series of rectangular compartments, set in a very massive framework with a good buttress enrichment. The tracery is early in type, and the whole composition is more suggestive of fourteenth than of fifteenth century work. It is affiliated to some of the earlier screenwork in the county, being of the same date as the screens at Halberton and Uffculme. The Bridgwater screens are of black oak, well preserved, with lustrous surface. There is another and smaller section of screenwork in the church of similar type, filling an archway between the north transept and the porch. It is united to a bench or stall on the transept side.

The Elizabethan screenwork which formerly ran across the chancel-opening (Plate LVB) is a work of consummate taste, the detail being, perhaps, as fine as anything the period can show. It now acts as a screen for the Corporation seats in the south transept, or south-aisle chapel, opening by two arches into the south wall of the church, near the eastern extremity of the aisle.

The screen is solid up to the height of the book-board, and above that, breaks into a series of open arcades, delicately feathered and supported by shafts encrusted with the richest of diaper-carvings—the whole surmounted by an entablature enriched with ornament in bas-relief on the frieze, interspersed with bosses and scutcheons, and having, above the cornice an arabesque bratishing of free and bold design.

PLATE LII



ROODSCREEN & BEAM  
HIGH HAM: SOMERSET





In the chancel stalls are preserved a number of ancient carved panels, incorporated with the fronts, and completely filling them.

The pulpit is a celebrated and beautiful example of early Perpendicular woodwork, probably coeval with the roodscreen. It rests upon a stone stem; and has a wide repute as one of the earliest known specimens of wood pulpits in English churches.

"Hints to Church Builders," Camden Soc., 1842; Talbot Bury, "Ecclesiastical Woodwork"; *Archæological Journ.*, vol. III; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, II, ii, p. 38; *ibid.*, VII, ii, p. 100; *ibid.*, XLIII (1897), p. 15.

**BROCKLEY.** The church has been described as being full of beautiful old carved work in wood and stone, a good deal having been collected and placed there by one of the Smyth-Pigott family. Rutter speaks of an altar-piece composed of a stone screen of several compartments, surmounted by elaborate finials, and tracery, etc., also an "elegantly-fronted gallery."

Rutter's "North West Somerset," p. 32.

**BROMPTON RALPH (St. Mary).** The roodscreen stood in perfect order, a thing of beauty, until a wanton vandalism was perpetrated about the year 1884, and it was cleared out by the late Rector, and taken at his instance, by a local carpenter named Criddle, to his house, Hartrow Manor—part of it was there made into an overmantel for the dining-room, and other portions worked into a sideboard.

Rev. S. Escott, the present occupant of Hartrow, has the remains of this screen in his custody, and he showed these to one of the writers. They were lying loosely about in his carpenter's shed. There are several of these fragments, probably quite sufficient to enable the work to be reconstructed on the old lines, but much has been used up by the carpenter from time to time, and the best carvings have been appropriated for domestic use. There are one or two tracery-heads remaining, as well as some of the moulded framework, but it is not well preserved. The heads are very fine, and recall those of the screen at Elworthy (Fig. 90) though they are rather later in the style, as the illustration shows (Fig. 91.)

The old screen before its wanton destruction must have been very fine. It is one of those cited as a model for church designers by the Camden Society in one of their earliest publications ("Hints to Church Builders," 1842), and from this we learn that it was very rich, with three divisions on each side of the central doorway. The doors were preserved, and dated from Charles II (*Ecclesiologist*).

Both this screen and that of Elworthy (a neighbouring parish) show a type of screen with arcaded openings, set in flat spandrels, or rather, *cut out of* flat rectangular panels, these being set in a rectangular frame (*vide* illustration of Elworthy). Thus they had no fan-vaulting. In both cases the flat surfaces exhibit more or less modern colour, and it is the writers' opinion that illumination of some sort would have been the original mode of treating these spaces.

The old pulpit from this church is now a sideboard in the Rectory House of Lydeard St. Lawrence.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, LII, pp. 60-61; *Ecclesiologist*, III (1844), p. 162 (illustration); Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 26; Camden Soc.'s "Hints to Church Builders" (1842).

**BRUSHFORD (St. Nicholas).** The screen is of the fan-vaulted type, and very similar in character to those of Withycombe and the screens of the south-west of Devon. It is of five bays, all of which have most unfortunately been robbed of their tracery, so that nothing but the bare open arcades, with their superincumbent vaulting, remains. Even the dado-rails have been for the most part sawn through, and the lower panels removed. Some of these have gone to build up the pulpit, which is attached to the southern bay of the screen.

The cornices are excellent, and, with the vaulting, have undergone restoration. The west face shows three bands of enrichment divided by beads, and furnished with a lower cresting of a well-known type.

The north-end bay is filled up with blank panelling, but retains a thickened central mullion, carrying the carved scroll which goes round all the principal framing.

The roodloft stairs are on the north side, and there are both doorways existing, with wooden frames. The screen is massive and perhaps rather large for the church, though not more so than some others. It is stated that there is documentary evidence that it came from Barlinch Abbey (presumably after the Dissolution). *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXIX, p. 59.

**BRUTON (St. Mary).** Formerly a grand and lofty roodscreen and gallery crossed the chancel arch. The turret-stair and doorway still remain.

The screen would appear to have been returned at right angles enclosing the aisle chapels, as at Dennington, Suffolk, or Cliffe Pypard, Wilts; and the loft approached by stair-turrets in the aisle-walls, of which portions yet remain. The chancel of this church was conventual, the nave constituting the parish church, and containing the altar of S. Aldhelm.

The nave was re-built, and afterwards extended one bay to the eastward by Gilbert, Abbot of Bruton.

Some traceried panels of fifteenth century work, doubtless from the old screen, are now incorporated in the massive Renaissance tower screen, which bears the date 1620, and contains some curious Jacobean tracery work in arched lights like that of Ditchat, now in the old Rectory there. *Som. Arch. Proc.*, VII, i, 5; *ibid.*, XXIV (1878), p. 35.

**BRYMPTON D'EVERCY (St. Andrew).** This church possesses a fine stone chancel screen (Fig. 129) of simple design, consisting of a series of plain arched fenestrations, well moulded, and having a cornice. Attached to the west side is a stone shelf or bench, the use or intention of which has been a matter of interest to antiquaries. The cornice beam is thought to be older than the screen.

The screen dates from the time of Henry VII, and was the benefaction of a member of the Sydenham family. It is one of a group of stone screens, which are fairly numerous on the southern border of the county.

The screen has an earlier appearance than the date would suggest. As a matter of fact the original cusping to the heads of the lights (probably once richly feathered) has been barbarously cut away, giving an appearance of plain Early English work. This screen has been compared to the stone screen at Broughton in Oxfordshire. Compare also Bradford Abbas, Dorset.

Measured drawing in "Spring Gardens Sketch Book," VIII, 28; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, IV, ii, pp. 6-8; *ibid.*, XVII, i, (1871), pp. 83-89; *ibid.*, XXXII, illustration (1886), p. 33 (Broughton, Oxon.).

**BUCKLAND (WEST).** The face of the arch is cut away, as at Bradford, but in a bolder and more irregular manner. *Vide* note on BRADFORD CHURCH (*supra*), also note on WELLINGTON CHURCH. *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXVIII, p. 24.

**BURRINGTON.** The old screenwork has disappeared from the church. There are two modern parcloes, of fair character, and a dwarf chancel screen of very amateurish design, not conforming to any of the recognised principles or traditions of form and detail.

**CADBURY (NORTH).** The roodscreen has been removed, but some interesting indications remain in the form of three iron staples let into the chancel arch, one being at the apex. Of these the central one was doubtless used as holdfasts for the chains supporting the great rood,

PLATE LIII  
SOMERSET ROODSCREENS



(A) KEYNSHAM



(B) EAST QUANTOXHEAD



but, from the position of the side ones, it has been conjectured that they supported the ritual veil drawn during Lent across this part.

There are two niches remaining in the east wall indicative of there having been an ancient reredos here. The oak bench-ends are dated 1538-40, and exhibit a variety of styles—Gothic and good Renaissance detail blended (as at Milverton). Those in the south-west appear English, the rest Dutch in character.

A close parallel to these bench-ends is found in those at Lapford, where the ornamental detail is said to be precisely similar, and the benches there are attributed to Dutch workmen.

(See ALFORD *supra*.)

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXVI p. 56.

**CANNINGTON (St. Mary).** The screenwork in this church has had rather an unfortunate history, since we learn from the *Ecclesiologist* that in 1843 or 1844 the roodscreen was cut down and formed into a fence for two large proprietary pews, whilst at the same time the beautiful Perpendicular pulpit being removed from its proper place, the carved benches sold to the contractor and the stained glass cleared away. Though thus in a large measure shorn of its ancient glories, the church retains an impressive dignity, and there is abundant evidence of the care and pains which have been bestowed upon it in later restorations.

Originally, the roodscreen ran across the whole width of nave and aisles (which are here unusually lofty) one bay westward of the aisle terminations, and the staircase to the loft is in the north wall. There were no doubt return screens or parcloes in the two arches to the east of the roodscreen.

Prior to the last restoration the mutilated remnants of screenwork were returned to form enclosures in the aisles, and the central gangway was cleared (*vide* plan preserved in vestry), but subsequently all the existing work was carefully renovated and restored in a large measure to its ancient position. As the work stands now, there is a central roodscreen of five bays, without doors, and this is largely of modern work very skilfully executed and toned to a deep rich brown, so that it is by no means easy to distinguish, at a general glance, the new from the old. The type of work is similar to that found in the Dunster district, the lower panels exhibiting the ornament characteristic of that type (*vide Somerset Archaeological Journal* for 1906), whilst the arcades are filled with the usual Perpendicular tracery. The fan-vaulting has completely disappeared, likewise the ancient cornice, and there appear instead a series of flat spandrel-pieces between the arches, relieved with sunk trefoiled tracery, and a new cornice of fairly good design over. There are two portions of screenwork in the aisles, in line with this screen, of similar character, and each of two bays, but they do not quite fill the width of the aisles, and each one is made out to the width necessary to meet the piers by the insertion of what appear to be fragments of parclose screenwork—that on the north side looks like a piece of original work (except the top section), whilst that on the south is new. The aisle screens proper appear to have a good deal of original work in them. The division adjoining the wall on the extreme north is an old one, and was formerly a doorway—possibly the original central doors of the roodscreen before the 1843 changes. That on the extreme south also appears old, and it will be noted that these two original fragments retain the thickened central mullion running into the head of the arch, whereas the new portions do not reproduce this feature.

The pulpit is interesting, of a beautiful and refined late fifteenth century type, but much of the work appears to have been renewed.

*Ecclesiologist*, III, 27; *Somerset Arch. Journ.*, XLIII, p. 39.

**CAMERTON (RADSTOCK).** Has an excellent modern screen in oak.

**CARHAMPTON (St. John Baptist).** The church possesses a fan-vaulted screen with arcades filled with Perpendicular tracery of the ordinary type. The heads are much more pointed than those of Dunster and Minehead screens.

The fan-vaulting is perfect, and well-proportioned, being vigorous in line, the filling between the ribs having a simple tracery enrichment.

The cornices are most remarkable, seeing that they consist of no less than five perfect rows of very delicate work, all quite different; and the crestings are perfect at top and bottom.

The whole was repaired and repainted in 1862-3. The painting was unfortunately overdone, the colours being too brilliant and the right quality of paint has not been used. The ancients used a medium which gave a delicate bloom, and did not conceal the natural texture of the wood, but modern restorers too often bedaub good oak with shiny paint or varnish, which quite alters for the worse the appearance and texture of the surface, and gives rise to unpleasant impressions of newness.

In 1842 a parelose-screen existed, but all trace is now gone.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, VI, p. 16; *ibid.*, LII, p. 67; Camden Soc., "Hints to Church Builders," 1842; "Bath Field Club Transactions," VIII, p. 274.

**CASTLE CARY (All Saints).** Part of the old roodscreen has been restored, and is now fitted to the vestry archway.

There is a richly-carved pulpit of fifteenth century work with a row of canopied niches for statuettes, very like those at Long Sutton, Queen Camel, etc.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXIV, p. 50; *ibid.*, XVI, p. 3.

**CHEDDAR (St. Andrew).** The roodscreen has disappeared, all but a small fragment preserved in a prayer desk, but there remain two aisle-screens, of remarkable character, and marked difference of design.

That in the north aisle (Plate CXXXIIB) is perhaps the best and consists of a series rectangular compartments having Perpendicular tracery in the heads, exhibiting a well-marked arch and traceried spandrels. Each division is of three lights, separated by slender mullions of unusual length. The main framework is well moulded and has a beautiful carved enrichment. There is an excellent running ornament in the head. The central compartment is furnished with double doors.

The lower panels are traceried, and contain a very remarkable feature, the small lights in the heads of the tracery-panels being pierced, apparently for the benefit of persons (probably children) kneeling at the screen, who could thus witness the elevation of the Host at Mass celebrated in the chantry within.

The screen in the south aisle is plainer, the compartments narrower, there being seven as against five on the north side. The tracery is simpler, both in fenestrations and lower panels, and the latter have none of the peculiar openings above referred to.

The pulpit is a very fine fifteenth century stone composition. The quality of the detail is good, and the foliage possesses an unusual character of design, well worthy of study for purpose of reproduction.

*Som. Arch. Journ.*, XXXIV (1888), pp. 42 and 75, and 1859, p. 41.

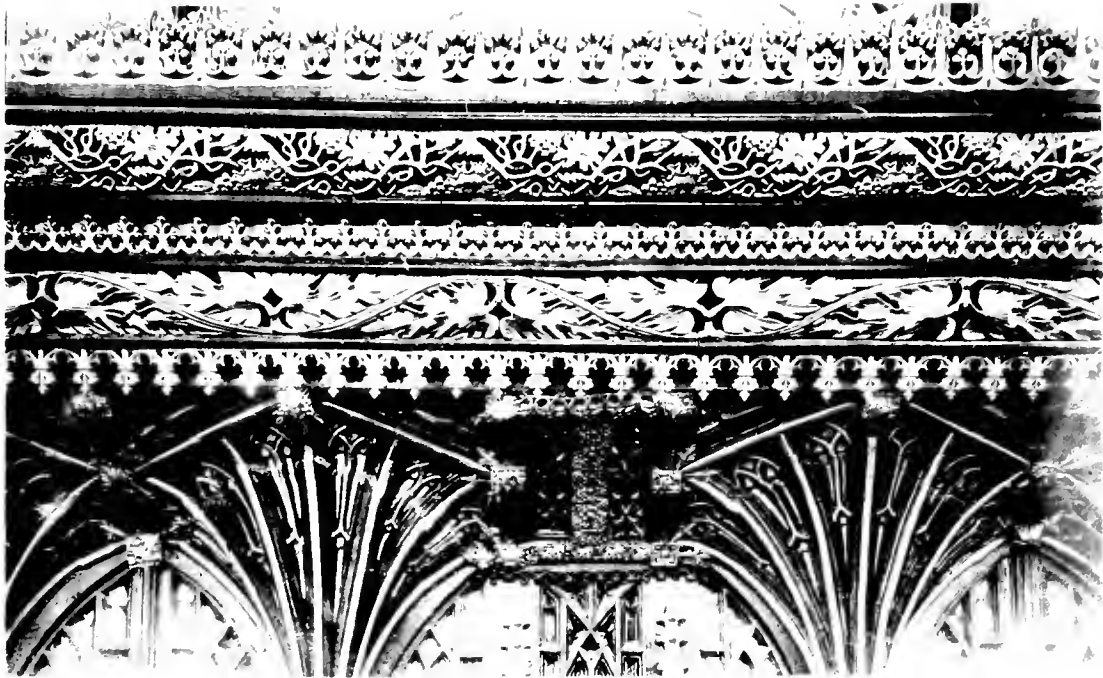
Nothing is now left of the central division of the screen but a small portion of the ornamental work incorporated with the prayer-desk. It seems to have been of unusual design, as regards the arrangement of the foliage.

The door of access to the roodloft yet remains, and there is an enriched ceiling, or canopy of honour, of two bays over the position of the loft.

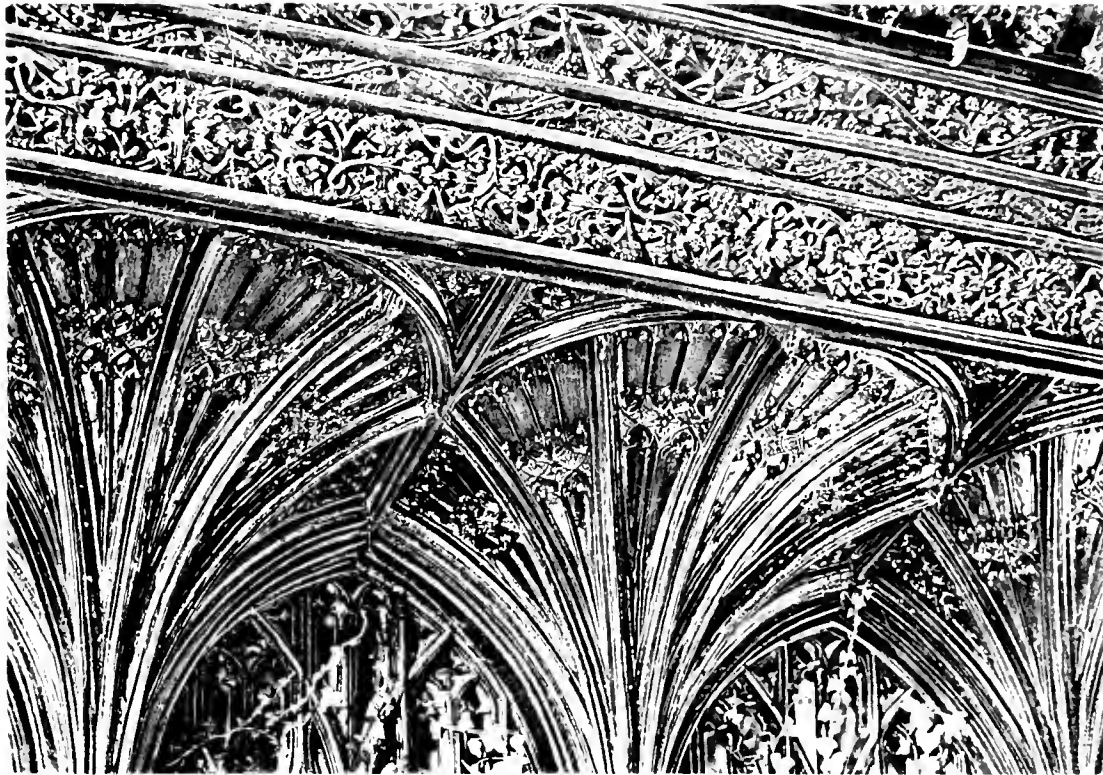
Rutter's "Somerset," p. 184; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXIV (1888), pp. 42 and 75.

PLATE LIV

TYPES OF VAULTING AND CORNICI WORK IN SOMERSET SCREEN



(A) ROODSCREEN: BANWELL (EAST SIDE)



(B) ROODSCREEN: FITZHEAD





**CHEDZOY (St. Mary).** The roodscreen with its loft was standing in a perfect state in 1841—but within a year or two after, the loft was taken down and removed to the west end to form the front for a singers' gallery, in which position it appears to have remained for many years. The screen was also removed, part being converted into a frame for a plaster representation of the "Lord's Supper."

There is now a chancel screen, chiefly of modern work, but incorporating some of the old. It is mentioned as being one of those worthy of note in Worth's "Guide to Somerset" (for 1885). The altar-rails are Jacobean.

There is a curious old pulpit with linen-fold panels; and the church also possesses a fine series of old bench-ends in their original position. An embroidered cope dated 1500 is one of the treasures of this church.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XLIII (1897), p. 42; *Ecclesiologist*, IV, p. 197; Worth's "Guide to Somerset," Stanford, 1885.

**CHELVEY (NAILSEA).** There is some good Jacobean panelling in the manorial pew of the "Tynte" family.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXVII (1881), p. 50.

**CHEW MAGNA (St. Andrew).** The roodscreen, with its aisle-continuations on north and south, survives in a fairly complete state, but has undergone a good deal of renovation, and has in consequence lost in a great measure the look of antiquity. It was anciently a painted screen, and the colour enrichments have been restored, once in 1754, when the fabric, being out of order, was repaired and re-decorated with colour. It was again repaired in the latter part of the nineteenth century. It is stated that the present colour is a careful restoration of the old.

The design is one of a class found in the Bristol neighbourhood, other related screens being those of Keynsham, Wrington, Whitchurch, and Long Ashton; but the Chew Magna screen has features quite distinct from the rest and in these respects stands alone. The most distinctive feature is the tracery which is unlike any of the others. The fenestrations are wider than those of the usual North Somerset pattern of screen, the openings being divided into two lights, headed by a four-centred depressed arch filled with tracery of a type rather unusual here, though commoner in Wilts, Gloucestershire, or the Midlands. Between the openings are buttressed standards, like Long Ashton, Keynsham, etc., but inferior in effect, and more attenuated. The screen is in three disconnected parts, as at Long Ashton and Wrington, and the central part has the appearance of having been shortened as it abuts at each end against the pillars with a half-bay. The arrangement of the cornices, with the flat spandrels filling up the space over the traceried openings, has a modern appearance, and it is probable that the original arrangement has been modified. But the screen belongs to a class which although containing arcaded lights, never would have had the fan-vaulting or groined soffit to the roodloft characteristic of the Devon or West Somerset type (of which Banwell is the nearest instance), but would certainly have been furnished with a continuous coved ceiling under the loft, such as we see at Willand.

The doorways (one in each section) are extremely wide, the central opening most unusually so (compare Fitzhead). The doors are missing. It may be questioned whether the width has not been altered in modern times.

This church also contains a carved oak desk of the Perpendicular period (*temp.*, Bishop Cornish) which is noteworthy.

*Ecclesiologist*, XXI, p. 117; *Som. Arch. Trans.*, XIV, ii, 98; "Hist. of Chew Magna," Fredk. A. Wood, p. 218*b*, also illustration of screen (Pl. V), and Desk (Pls. XVII and XVIII); Rutter's "Somerset."

**CHEWSTOKE.** This church has a screen designed by the late Mr. John Norton, some years ago, on the restoration of the church.

**CHEWTON MENDIP** (St. Mary Magdalen). There are in this church a massive Jacobean balustrade and gate, fixed as a septum before the altar. There was formerly a triple chancel-opening of Norman date, but this was cut away in mediæval days for the insertion of a wider pointed arch, and at the same time the corner of the south wall was pared away.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XIX, p. 33.

**CHILTON CANTELO** (St. James). This church has a stone screen, well restored, said to exhibit some unexplained features, in the form of certain stone projections from the walls of the chancel and transept by the screen, some of which have been thought to be brackets for images, but not all are equally suitable for this purpose.

Rev. C. Goodford, *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XX, p. 70.

**CHURCH STANTON.** (1) A good roodscreen existed here up to the earlier part of the nineteenth century. Nothing is ascertained of the fate of its fragments.

(2) There is in the church a most interesting western gallery in which a quantity of old oak panels are incorporated. These comprise (a) a series of what appear to be bench-ends, richly carved, and exhibiting a great variety of detail, with some Renaissance admixture and dating probably from about 1530, and (b) some very rich traceried panels, purer in style, like those at Wiveliscombe, now turned over and used as a book-rest, supported by lesser fragments of carving (Plate LIA).

**CLAPTON-IN-GORDANO** (St. Michael). In the tower arch is a massive oak screen of thirteenth century date, of enormous solidity and deeply undercut. It is handsomely moulded, and has two arched openings with a tracery wheel over same, within the principal arch. It formerly belonged to the old hall of the Manor House, and stood for many years prior to its removal here, as a gateway to an orchard. Rutter gives a woodcut of it.

There is a simple reredos on the east wall consisting of a moulded shelf, and two corbels for lights. The ancient candlesticks of latten are still extant, which stood upon these corbels.

The bench-ends in this church show some simple poppy-heads, rudely cut, which are among the earliest known.

Rutter's "North-West Somerset," pp. 223, 229; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, X, i, 25, illustration of Benches.

**CLEEVE.** (*See OLD CLEEVE.*)

**COMBE FLOREY** (St. Peter). The roodscreen, with its doors, was standing perfect in 1844-5, and is one of those mentioned by the editors of the *Ecclesiologist* as models for architects to follow. Since that date it has disappeared and no trace can be found, but possibly Hartrow Manor House in the adjoining parish, if it were to disgorge all the church work it has appropriated, could reveal something of interest.

The fine old oak pulpit and bench-ends still remain.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 44; *Ecclesiologist*, III, p. 162.

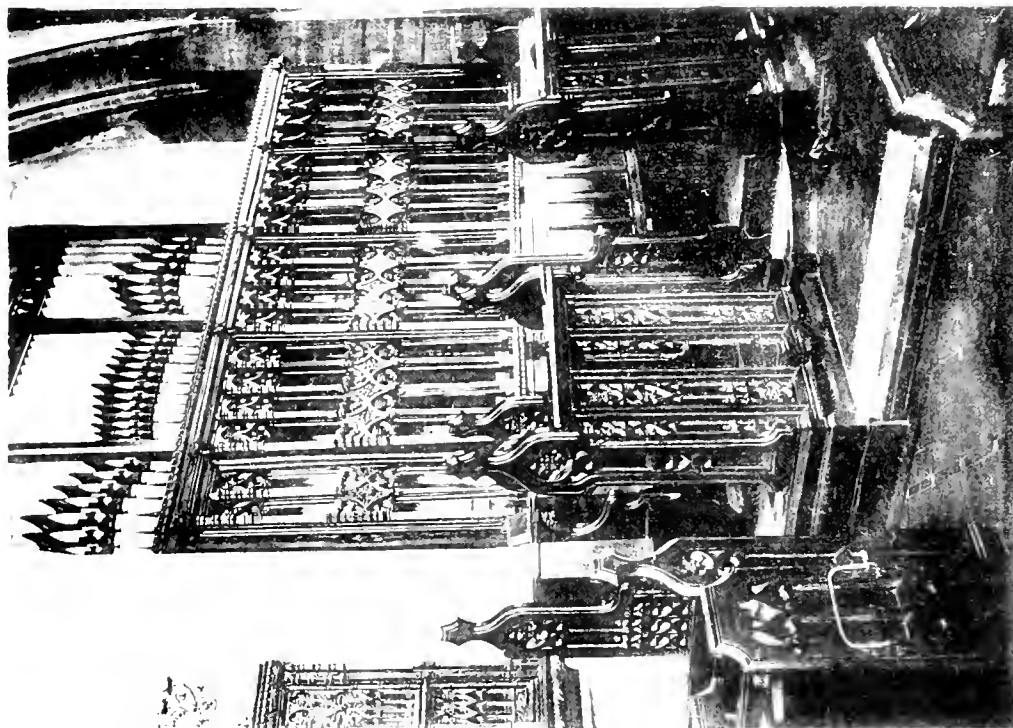
**COMBE ST. NICHOLAS** (St. Nicholas). The roodscreen, of a type characteristic of a district of Devon, elsewhere described as the "Exe Valley" type, was removed many years since, when the church was renovated.

Two sections only were retained, and these, with their fan-vaulting attached, have been placed as parcloles to north and south of chancel.

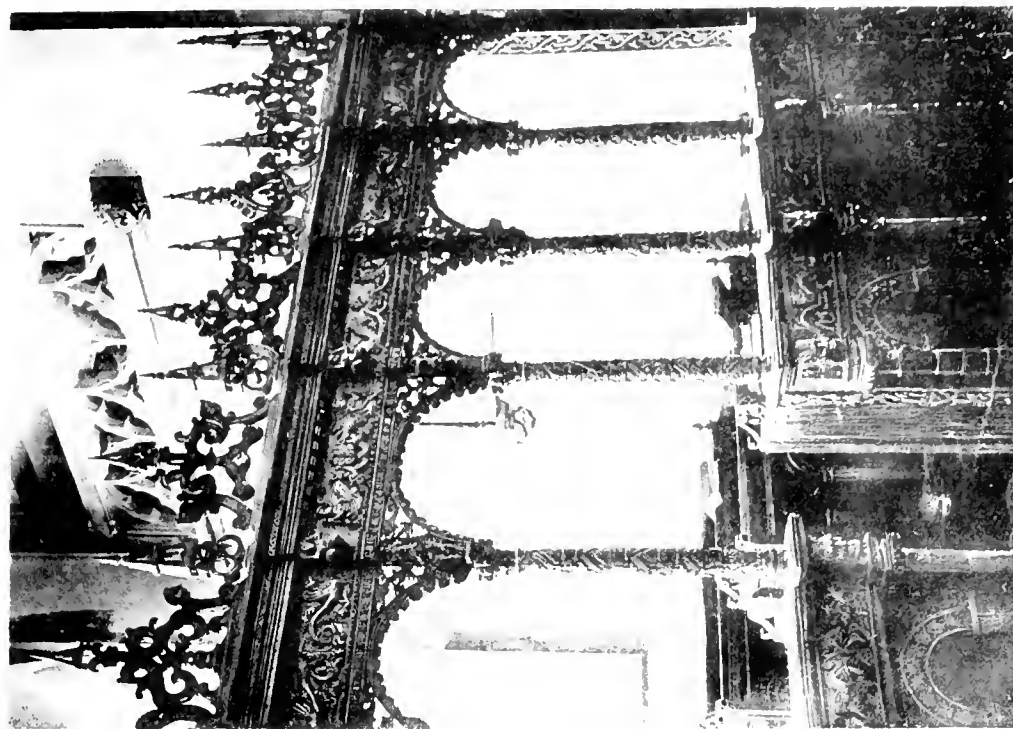
The original vaulting is preserved, and a single enrichment of the cornice over. The work is very beautiful, having all the refinement indicative of an early and good date for the work. The screen at Halse is similar in many respects.

The old screen, of which a portion was still standing in 1882, was famous for the unexceptionable delicacy of its lines, and the beauty of its enrichments.

PLATE LV  
SCREENS IN BRIDGWATER CHURCH



(A) EARLY WOOD SCREENWORK  
Now used as parcloles to Chancel



(B) POST-REFORMATION SCREEN  
Now enclosing the Corporation Seats in South Chapel





FIG. 94

It retained its ancient colour, which, in the surviving sections, has been badly "restored"—in fact, what appears now is quite modern.

A good deal of the fine carved work, with figures of birds, etc., was carried away, and most of it got into private hands. Some reached South Kensington Museum, and a few fragments have within recent years been restored to the church. The pulpit is decorated with a cornice of old vine ornament from the screen. At the summer meeting of the Somerset Archæological Society in 1882, the then President said he had a small portion of it worked into the cornice of his library bookcase.

The church has been fearfully injured by renovations which have destroyed its appearance internally, and left little or nothing of interest.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XV, p. 5; *ibid.*, XXVIII, p. 36; *Western Morning News*, April 20th, 1905; Worth's "Guide to Somerset."

**COMPTON DUNDON (St. Andrew).** There is in this church the base of a screen. It is of stone, breast-high; very massive, and perfectly plain. Nothing is left of the superstructure, and it is open to conjecture whether this was of stone, like Brympton d'Evercy, or of wood, like Congresbury. In the eastern extremity of the nave-wall is a small window for lighting the roodloft.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, IX, p. 22; Worth's "Guide to Somerset," p. 131.

**COMPTON MARTIN (St. Michael)** (Fig. 94). Within living memory there stood in this church a light Perpendicular roodscreen almost precisely reproducing the features of those still standing at Wellow, West Pennard, etc. It is alluded to in an early number of the *Somerset Archæological Journal*, and in a subsequent number (1873) its disappearance is noted. Enquiry as to its ultimate fate has been unsuccessful.

The type of work may be judged of by examination of the screenwork still remaining, which is a counterpart of it, as regards detail, the doorway being like Wellow.

The existing screens enclose a chapel at the end of the south aisle, and offer a favourable specimen of work of this class. The carving is bold and good, and there is a small enrichment incised in the transom-rail which is worthy of notice.

*Proc. Somerset Arch. Soc.*, XIX (1873), i, pp. 26, 27; Rutter's "Somerset," p. 198; Bath Field Club *Trans.*, I, p. 127.

**CONGRESBURY (St. Andrew)** (Plate LVI). (1) The roodscreen remains in a comparatively perfect state. It is of excellent Perpendicular work, and resembles in its general character the screenwork typical of the district, but has a superiority of design, in that the narrow square-headed lights are grouped in triple series within well-proportioned panels of heavier framework; and the frame is boldly moulded, with well-developed enrichments inserted in the main hollow between the beads. This remains in the head, but is lost in the upright members.

The cornices have two rows of fine vine-leaf ornament in addition to the enriched member above described, which follows along the head under them, forming a single group.

The tracery-heads are exceptionally good of their kind, as will be seen on reference to the photographic illustration.

A peculiar feature of this screen is that the wooden cill below the lights (which is very massive, and about 12 in. deep) rests upon an ancient stone base about 2 ft. 6 in. high, having on either side of the central opening, to the west, the remains of small stone buttresses of ornamental character. These have been cut away, however, and but little is left of them. The screen doors have been taken out, and now (1906) form part of a modern tower-arch screen of good Perpendicular design.

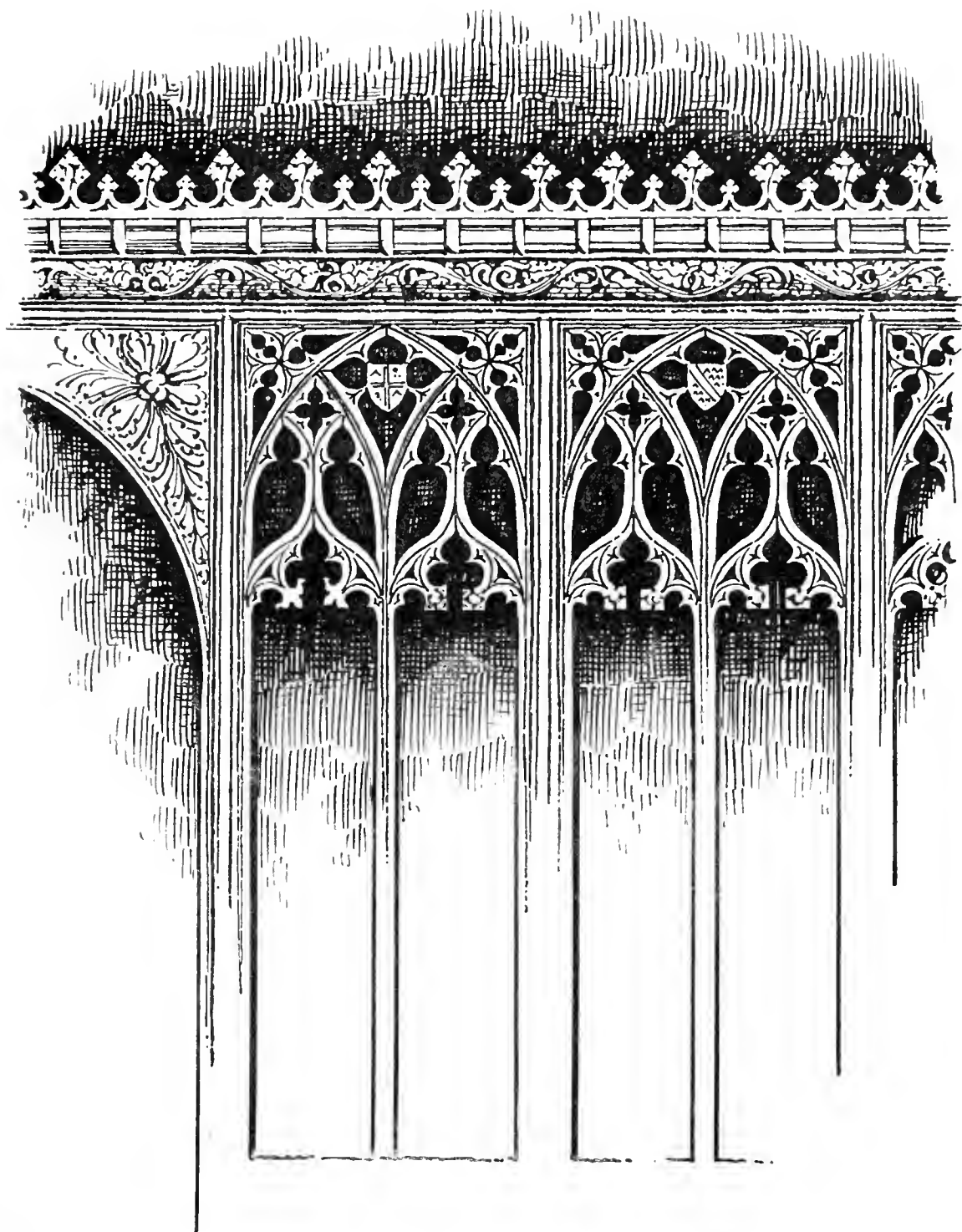


FIG. 95

(2) There is a screen fencing the chantry chapel on the south side of the chancel (Fig. 95)

This is largely of modern workmanship, especially in the upper portion, but contains some interesting old work of an early type, the tracery in the pointed heads being especially noticeable.

This screen appears to have been shortened, and does not fit its present position.

The upper part seems not to belong to the lower, but has been rather roughly fitted to it. The lower part is furnished with a stall to the eastward, with moulded arms—apparently a choir-stall. The chancel is fenced on the south side by a parclose screen of modern workmanship, in imitation of the work last described, and this is placed upon a panelled stone base, which appears to be old, and corresponds to that on which the chancel screen rests.

(3) Tower screen (modern) containing the old roodscreen doors, as above described.

The roodscreen was reconstructed at a fairly recent date.

*Building News*, Sept. 5th, 1890, measured drawings; Worth's "Guide to Somerset," p. 74; *Som. Arch. Soc. Proc.*, X, i, p. 9, illustrations; *ibid.*, X, i, p. 29; *ibid.*, III, ii, 38.

**COUNTISBURY.** (*See DEVON.*)

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXVIII, p. 61.

**CREECH (St. Michael).** The south aisle, which was the private chapel of the "Celey" family, of Charlton, was formerly separated by a handsome stone screen, from the nave. There is a reading-desk, dated 1634, in which, and also in the pulpit, some fragments of the old roodscreen are believed to be incorporated.

Worth's "Guide to Somerset," p. 74; Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 38.

**CREWKERNE.** This church, which possesses a central tower, is one of those which appear to have had two screens—an arrangement not infrequently found in the county. Corbels on the eastern piers of the crossing mark the one—and a door, high up over the western arch points to the existence of another—both having lofts over them.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXVII, p. 20.

**CROSCOMBE (St. Mary the Virgin)** (Plate XLVIII A). This church is replete with ancient oak, despite the fact that some of its treasures were taken out some years since and sold. Part are now in a house at South Petherton.

The chancel screen is a most imposing and dignified structure, dating from 1618, the gift of one of the Fortescue family, who also gave the pulpit. It towers up into the roof and its many tiers of fine ornament have a wonderfully grand effect. It bears the royal arms on a large central panel, under which are lesser heraldic achievements,<sup>1</sup> including the arms of Fortescue.

The arabesque bratishings above the screen and pulpit are free and bold in design, and very effective (Fig. 78).

The screen originally stood one bay further to the west, and since its removal, the two parcloes which formerly filled the first arches to the eastward were removed—now there remain only two parcloes, in the arches furthest to the east. These are extremely fine, and are encrusted with flat carvings of good design, like the chancel screen. The arabesque panel illustrated is from the back of the latter, and is given as a good example of the Decorative composition of the period.

The form and arrangement of the two reading-pews in front of the screen will be noted. This is an usual Post-Reformation plan, but not often seen now, as the restorers have swept most of them away. An old sketch of Tiverton screen shows precisely the same arrangement, and reading pews of this kind may still be seen (though on one side only) at Raddington, Somerset, or Little Somerford, N. Wilts.

<sup>1</sup> On the cornice are the following coats, viz., (1) Azure, on a bend engrailed argent, cotised or, a crescent for difference. (2) The same, impaling or, on a fesse dancetté between three cantons *sable*, each charged with a lion rampant of the first; three bezants.



PLATE LVI



TRACERY PANELS IN ROODSCREEN, CONGRESBURY, SOMERSET



The screen itself is a strange testimony to the ecclesiastical ideas prevalent at the times, showing the mixture of High Church feeling and Erastian principles.

The chancel arch here is a mere rib, without any abutment in aisles. The ornamental tie-beam in the Jacobean roof of chancel just behind the arch is probably inserted there as a tension-bar. Until 1845 the position of the screen was just behind this arch.

The pulpit is a grand piece of work, and its sounding-board a thing of beauty.<sup>1</sup>

There are a great many benches of late fifteenth century work in the church, with simple traceried ends and backs, and a few fairly good poppy-heads. Other benches are Jacobean.

*Architectural Review*, Vol. III, p. 91, illustration; *Building News*, 1889, July 26, measured drawing; Collinson's "Somerset," III, p. 469; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXIV, p. 69.

**CROWCOMBE (Holy Trinity)** (Plate XLVIII B). There is a beautiful screen of the later English Renaissance to the chancel, with a return, or *parclose*, of the same character. The work probably dates from about the time of George I and exhibits grace and refinement, with a departure from the severe formalism of the period in the beautiful pierced scroll work with which the heads are filled. These give the screen an appearance quite suggestive of earlier forms, and are no doubt inspired by the idea of the Gothic tracery-heads.

The church contains a beautiful pulpit of late seventeenth or early eighteenth century date (*vide* illustration, and a splendid series of sixteenth century bench-ends, carved with vivid and bold designs—dated 1534).

**CUCKLINGTON.** The old roodscreen has been removed from its ancient position, and now stands in the north aisle.

It is of oak, very substantial, and well moulded, but extremely plain, consisting of three main divisions, each containing four narrow square-headed panels, having a little tracery of good character in the heads.

**CULBONE (St. Culborne)** (Fig. 96). This diminutive church (measuring 33 ft. × 12 ft. internally) retains its roodscreen of early type, consisting of three compartments, of which the centre contained the doors. These have disappeared, most unfortunately, as the compartment is now a wide blank rectangular space. The side panels are filled with tracery of a massive and early type, each having four lights with semi-circular cinque-foiled heads, the lower cusps foliated—and superimposed on these heads are a band of quatre-foiled wheels or circles—all enclosed in a framework bearing the scroll pattern (or twisted leaf and stem device) common to West-Country screens. The design is comparable to that of Williton (fragments). Enmore, Pawlett, and that of Luccombe was probably similar, but this appears much earlier, being ruder and more massive than the others, and more archaic in its tracery forms. It probably dates from 1380-1400.

The original character is somewhat marred by the substitution of later and thinner mullions for the original shafts, whilst the screen suffers also in effect from the loss of its cornice enrichments, and the presence of a very poverty-stricken piece of fretwork which in 1906 was still doing duty as a cresting.

The roodloft here would have been a simple hollow or flat coving inclining westwards to the beam or bressummer of the gallery, as described elsewhere (pp. 125 *supra*).

The beam supporting the rood was overhead, traversing the chancel-wall on its western face at a higher level, where a corbel still remains to indicate its former position. The lower panels of the screen show the linenfold pattern, which also appears on old benches in the church.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXV (1889), p. 25 (E. Buckle); *ibid.*, LII, pp. 26-28 and p. 62 (F. Bligh Bond) (illustration); Worth's "Guide to Somerset"; *Athenæum*, Sept. 15th, 1906, "Churches of the Carhampton Hundred," by Dr. J. Charles Cox, F.S.A.

<sup>1</sup> On it are engraven the arms of Bishop Lake, of Bath and Wells. The greater part of the body of the pulpit is richly coloured, which heightens the effect.

**CURRY RIVEL** (St. Andrew) (Fig. 88). The central part of the roodscreen has been swept away, but there remain the two aisle sections, each of four bays or divisions, and standing perfect with their fan-vaulting and cornices. These screens are most extraordinary and are like nothing else which the writers have seen. The lights are arcaded, and traceried, being divided by a stout central mullion running to apex of arch, and again subdivided (making four tracery lights in each division) by lesser mullions, carried to tracery in the heads of a Decorated order, the strangest feature of which is its wildly uneven and irregular execution.

The lights are transomed, but not in the ordinary way. The transoms here are like square tablets pierced with quatrefoils (a carved patera between their cusps) let in between the mullions, and rather recessed behind them. These also are strangely irregular in shape.

The screens are enormously massive—another proof of their early date—and the vaulting springs from shafts, not engaged with the main standards, but detached, and standing at some distance clear from the screen, resting at foot upon the projecting rail, which here stands out far in advance of the screen panels and framework generally. The whole of the execution is heavy, and like the work of a man accustomed to work of a coarser order than screenwork; but the fan-vaults are skilfully developed and have a very graceful sweep. The cornice enrichment has a large vine-leaf rather of an early character. Altogether the indications go to show that the screens would not be likely to date much later than the end of the fourteenth century, and they might well be earlier than this.

The church contains some fine oak benches with poppy-heads, and ancient stalls in the chancel.

Worth's "Guide to Somerset"; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XI, p. 21; *ibid.*, XL, p. 28.

**DITCHEAT** (St. Mary Magdalene). Formerly in this church was a carved oak screen with stalls and chancel-fittings of Jacobean date, and the following reference is made to the same in the "Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological Society":

Vol. 13 (1863), Part 1, p. 23, "Screen, stalls and choir-fittings, dated 1630, of unique character and valuable historically, as typical of the arrangement of that date." In the *Ecclesiologist*, Vol. 6 (1846), p. 184, it is described as follows: "There is a perfect roodscreen of two bays on each side of the holy doors, which are perfect, and quasi-stalls, with desks returned, and running to the extreme east end, where they terminate against the wall, enclosing as it were in their arms the sacarium, which is confined by rails. The date of this woodwork is 1630, a date which is twice repeated on the western side of the screen, with the initials W. W. and T. H. respectively. The work is cinque-cento, but with an appreciation of pointed forms, e.g., an exaggerated pierced vine-pattern fills the space below the crest. This instance of Catholic arrangement is very curious, and not less curious is it that in the north-eastern bay of the nave stands a rich cinque-cento gallery of apparently the same date, and therefore one of the earliest in England. It is excessively curious to find thus standing side by side in the same church, and apparently the work of the same hand, so late a specimen of ancient Catholic and so early a one of modern Protestant arrangement."

Reference is also made to this work in Phelps's "History of Somerset," Vol. 2. He says: "A small carved screen divides the chancel from the tower. . . . There is a large carved seat or gallery in the north aisle, on which formerly stood an organ. A row of oak seats with high panelled backs, and desks in front, extends around the chancel, and over the screen are carved the arms of Hopton, dated 1630, who most probably caused the seats to be erected."

Both stalls, screen and gallery, were swept away not many years after the visit of the Somerset Archaeological Society in 1863, and whatever was considered worth preserving seems to have been taken to the old Rectory House, then the residence of the Rector, and the sounder parts used for the adornments of the hall and passages. The present Rector, Rev. C. E. Leir, whose

PLATE LVII



SCREEN IN SOUTH TRANSIPT, DINSTER CHURCH, SOMERSET



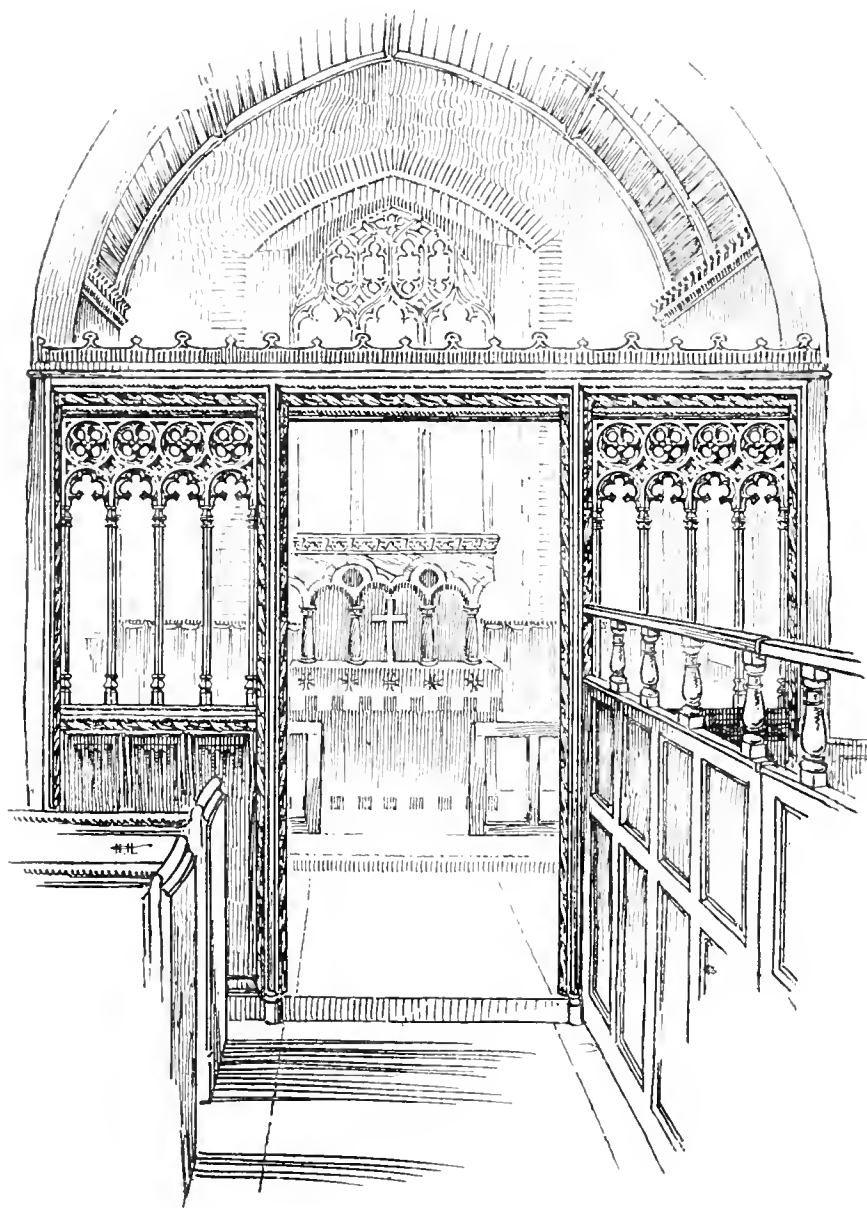


FIG. 96

father removed the fittings, says: "The chancel screen being in great disrepair was removed some forty years ago, and the sounder portions annexed by the Rectory (now Priory) as the fittest place for same." This statement may be compared with that in the *Ecclesiologist* in respect of the condition of the screen in 1844.

Major-General Leir Carleton says, under date April 24th, 1903: "I remember the arrangement of the chancel and the rest of the church before the alteration which my father made some fifty years ago.

"The chancel floor was in a terribly ruinous state, difficult to walk over, and the chancel seats around were *ditto* and inconvenient, so that when he repaved the chancel he pulled them down and in their place put up the present handsome choir-stalls. There was an oak screen, also dated 1630, but it was not a handsome one. That was taken down at the suggestion of Prof. Freeman."

The Somerset Archæological Society again visited the church in 1878, when nothing was said about this work, and a third time in 1890, when Rev. Preb. Thring briefly alluded to the former screen. The doors of the old screen, forming the central compartment, are now standing in the Priory and are in very good condition. They have arched heads with a feathering, and they are set within an arched head, filled with tracery of an interesting type—foliage and arabesque. Upon the frame are illuminated shields with arms and dates 1785 and 1812. The approximation to the Gothic form of the head, and the vine leaf in the tracery below, give the work an added interest. The execution is rather rough. There is also a quantity of carved panelling arranged around the walls which may very possibly have been originally at the back of the stalls. Whether any of the cornice remains has not been ascertained.

Within the wide squint or hagioscope on the south side of the chancel-arch is a remnant of the pre-Reformation screen, consisting of a section of the lower panelling. It exhibits the customary divisions with ornament of cinquefoil head and quatrefoiled wheels in the spandrels. There is a similar hagioscope on north side of arch.

The chancel is much modernised, and has a bare appearance with its flat plaster ceiling and naked walls. The stalls substituted are an obvious innovation for the older work—though solid and expensive, they are essentially Victorian.

The stairs to the former roodloft are in the north wall of nave, and in addition to the fifteenth century access-door in the church, have also an external approach—a very unusual feature.

The stairs commence with a straight flight outside the wall of north aisle, being carried thence on a stone arch across the aisle into the tower pier, from the west wall of which a door opens on to the loft. There is a canopy of honour to the roodloft still remaining, in the shape of an enriched and coloured section of the nave roof.

The pulpit and reading-desk, both Jacobean, stand under the western arch of the crossing. Both have been much injured by renovations of a careless sort, the desk being painted and grained. The rich cinque-cento gallery spoken of by the editors of the *Ecclesiologist* has disappeared, and its ornamental features have doubtless been appropriated with all the rest of the seventeenth century woodwork.

Thus has Richard Hopton's pious gift been converted to private use and enjoyment; all that is now left in the church being the oak tablet bearing his achievement, placed there to testify to his gift.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XIII, p. 23; *ibid.*, XXXVI, pp. 26-28; *Ecclesiologist*, VI (1846), p. 184; Phelps' "Hist. of Somerset," II, pp. 266 *et seq.*; Worth's "Guide to Somerset."

**DONYATT (St. Mary).** A part of the old roodscreen is now made into a screen for the tower-arch. There are also some old oak benches (*temp.* Henry VIII), showing the linen fold panel.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XIII, p. 23.



PLATE LVIII

WEST SOMERSET ROODSCREENS (VAULTED TYPE)



(A) BISHOP'S LYDEARD



(B) HALSE



**DOULTING.** The chancel screen is modern, having been placed in the church about forty years ago, when the fabric was to a large extent rebuilt. It is of oak, solid, and in style a sort of early "Decorated," but more Victorian than anything else. It has a central-gabled canopy, with wrought-iron work introduced into the fenestrations.

There are also aisle-screens and north parclose of massive oak, modern but good—being middle Decorated in character and much more in conformity with ancient types. The transept roofs with their rich Perpendicular cornices and "angel" corbels are a notable feature of this church. They have been very skilfully reconstructed.

**DUNSTER (St. George).** (1) The church at Dunster contains what is perhaps the most celebrated example of screenwork in this district. Its history is elsewhere recorded, and as to this, we need do no more than remind our readers that it was erected in 1499 to furnish a division between the parochial and the monastic parts of the church. It stretches the whole width of the church, from north to south, having no less than fifteen compartments, including the central doorway. Above the vaulting, which is perfect, are the enriched cornices. On the west side these consist of four rows of very delicate conventional ornament, carved in hollow relief, and attached to concave surfaces, or "casement" mouldings in the beam, divided by beads. In one of these rows the original ornament has disappeared and its place is taken by fragments of a small cresting from another part. The original hanging or inverted cresting remains below the beam, but of the uppermost or erect cresting only a trace remains. The tracery-heads are of peculiar shape, being more segmental than usual, and low in proportion to their width. This was often done to give better development and straighter or less hollow ribs to the vaulting. Around the openings is seen the stem and twisted leaf-ornament, and below the rail the solid sections are panelled in a manner characteristic of work in this neighbourhood. (*See* introductory note, p. 138.)

The screen possesses one feature of particular interest in the rectangular projection over the vaulting eastward of the choir doors. The object of this was probably the accommodation of a choir organ, which was a customary part of the equipment of these lofts for some time prior to the Reformation; though it may be argued with some show of plausibility that this space may have been used for the reception of the oak "Calvary" forming the foot of the great rood—a heavy baulk with sockets such as we still see preserved at Cullompton (*vide* note on CULLOMPTON, DEVON).

We incline, however, to the "organ" theory in this instance, in view of the strength of the evidence as to the universality of these instruments, in such a place.

The following note, contributed by Rev. C. H. Heale, is of interest in connection with the principal screen in this church:

1514. "Symon Pers by will proved May 15, 1514, left 20d. to the Rode lyght."

1674. *Ex parish accounts*: "Pd. Wm. Warman for mending the Rod' loft & for timber about it .. .. 7<sup>s</sup>/-"

1704. "Pd. for cleaning the Rodloft, the pillars and windows .. .. 2<sup>s</sup>/-"  
and in connection with the smaller screen, now in the arch leading to the south choir chapel, the following is of especial interest as tending to show the concern which Royalty took in Dunster Church:

In the will of King Henry VI, proved in 1471, mention is made of a "reredosse" bearing the roodloft parting the choir from the body of the church.

"This beautiful screen," to quote the words of an antiquary, "formerly stood between the eastern piers of the tower, which was no doubt its original position."

Savage, who wrote *circa* 1800, says that the Vicar (Parson Lee) had just then had it whitewashed.

(2) There is a parclose screen of singular beauty now standing in the arch leading from the south transept into the S. choir chapel. We give an illustration (Plate LVII). The screen is perfect, with its doors, and appears to be of early fifteenth century date. The design is very rich and delicate, with its fillings of pierced tracery above and below the middle rails, which are again divided by a filigree band. Formerly this screen may have stood between the eastern piers of the tower, but there was another screen of similar design in the church not many years ago, and one of the pair was no doubt the old roodscreen, before the erection of the great screen in 1499. *Som. Arch. Proc.*, VI, i, pp. 8-9 (illustration of screen); *ibid.*, VI, ii, p. 1; *ibid.*, XXXV (1889), p. 40; *ibid.*, LII, pp. 56-61, and 64-66, with illustrations; *Building News*, Sept. 9th, 1898 (sketches and sections of parclose screen); *Arch. Assoc. Sketch, Book III* (3rd series), Plate 6; "History of Dunster," Sir H. Maxwell-Lyte, K.C.B.

**DURSTON.** An open screen to the tower with gallery over is mentioned as standing in 1873. There are also some old bench-ends. *Jeboult's "West Somerset,"* II, p. 46.

**ELWORTHY (STOGUMBER).** The chancel-screen is a composition of mixed character. The tracery heads (six in number) are of early date—distinctively "Decorated," and unlike anything else remaining in the district, save those of Brompton Ralph, which are now disintegrating in the sheds at Hartrow Manor (Fig. 90).

These Elworthy panels have been incorporated with a screen of Laudian date, along the cornice of which runs the quaint legend:

"O Lord, prepare our *arts* to praye: Anno 1632."

There is a simple ornament above, but the rest of the screen is quite plain.

The choir-stalls in this church are noteworthy and contain in their panels a type of enrichment similar to the Dunster screen panels.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, LII; *Jeboult's "West Somerset,"* II, p. 47.

**ENMORE (St. Michael).** The beautiful little screen of this church was quite wantonly turned out at the Restoration under Ferrey in the "eighties," and was removed to Huish Episcopi, where it found a home in the church, and now does duty as a tower screen (Fig. 97).

It is one of a class of screens which, though of simple and unassuming design, are of special interest. This one and the old screen of Williton Church were sister screens, evidently designed by the same hand. The screens at Pawlett, Culbone, Staple Fitzpaine, and East Quantoxhead are related to this group—as are also (but less nearly) those of Winsham, Otterhampton and Stockland Bristol.

The screen has rectangular compartments, divided each into four lights, the head being filled with a reticulation of ogee quatrefoils supporting carved lozenges between the cusps. The door is perfect. It has the rare characteristic of being single, not folding. This is mentioned as a peculiarity in the *Ecclesiologist* for 1844.

A new tower screen of Renaissance character, adapted from the work in Bridgwater Church, has been recently erected.

*Ecclesiologist*, III, p. 162.

**EVERCREECH (St. Peter).** Some panels of a fourteenth-century screen are formed into a gallery-front across the tower-arch, together with two other panels which have the appearance of bench-ends. The screen panels are something like those of Elworthy, or Congresbury (south aisle chapel screen), but have pierced spandrels enclosing the arched tracery heads in a rectangular frame. All are smothered in paint.

The chancel is a fourteenth-century one—the east window of an earlier date than the side lights, which are about the same date as the screen panels.

There is a fine fifteenth-century roof to the nave, retaining what is apparently old colour, though it may have had a conservative restoration. It has the dull surface or "bloom" characterising the old colour-work, and shows a blue, or greenish-blue, white, red, and black, the beads being twisted in black-and-white, and red-and-white, bosses and angels' wings gilt.

PLATE LIX



LONG SUTTON, SOMERSET: MEDIEVAL PULPIT AND ROODSCREEN

(THE COVING OF LOFT IS MODERN)



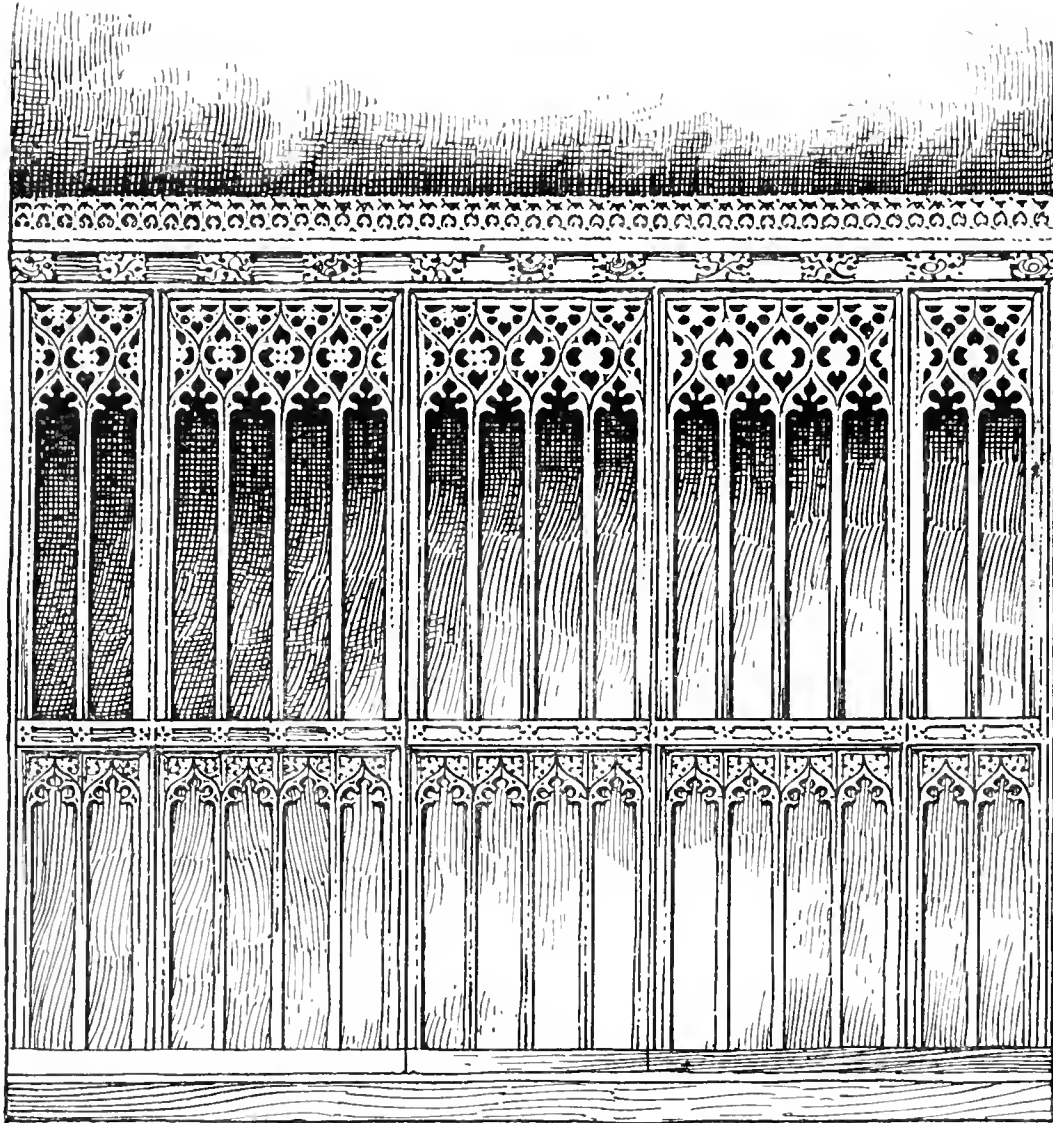


FIG. 97

**EXFORD.** Parts of the old roodscreen were preserved *circa* 1850 in one of the Rector's outhouses. Dr. Cox says that they consisted of beams, and other fragments. No trace of them could be found on recent enquiry.

**EXTON (St. Peter).** The roodscreen was standing complete until shortly before 1845, when one half of it was removed to make a passage from the reading-desk to the priests' pew in the chancel. It is to be feared that all has now disappeared. The screen formerly supported the royal arms.  
*Ecclesiologist*, IV, p. 246.

**FITZHEAD (St. James).** This church has been rebuilt in anything but a conservative manner. The roodscreen (Plate LIVB) was removed at the rebuilding in 1849, and for many years found a place at the west end of the church, against the wall, the vaulting having apparently been removed on the further side to accommodate this. It is at last restored to its rightful place—an enormous improvement to the church. The most striking feature is the great gap in the centre, which is spanned by a continuation of the vaulting as a depressed elliptic head. This work is probably modern. The old work is very peculiar in design. The framework is immensely solid, lower panels plain, standards between lights bearing shafts with caps of curious design like the heads of rainwater pipes in wood; the arcades filled with good Perpendicular tracery, the mullions unbroken by any band, as at Halberton, Bishop's Lydeard, etc. The vaulting is, perhaps, the strangest feature. The ribs intersect, not with the customary angular rib, but with a curved one, and in meeting they are turned upwards to unite with the curve which crosses them at a rather higher level. The fillings are delicately traceried with narrow Perpendicular panels, cusped and forming interlacing ogees at their intermediate length. Above is a magnificent cornice of three enrichments divided by beads, there being an independence of quality about this as there is about the rest of the work. Unfortunately the crestings are missing (Plate LIVB).

Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 48.

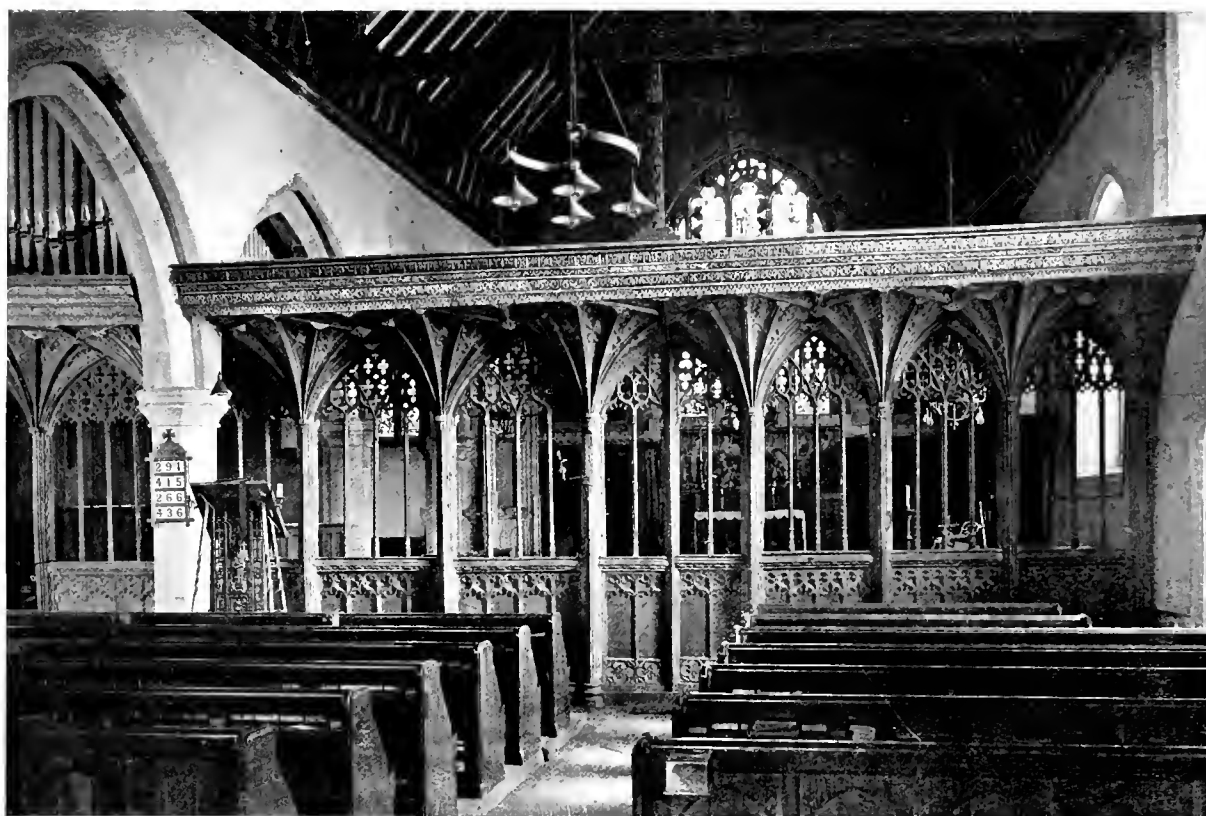
**FROME (St. John Baptist).** In old days a magnificent roodloft spanned the stately nave of this church. It is mentioned as having been inspected as a model for the loft and screen at Yatton in 1447-8. All trace of this structure has vanished. An Early English doorway and piscina on the south of the chancel-arch determined the position of the old work, but the position of the door shows that the old gallery ran further to the west than the new one does. There is an extremely handsome modern screen and loft. The screen is not of the Somerset type, but is more East Anglian in character. It is of six lights, the doorway occupying the width of the two central—having a feathered ogee head forking the mullion over. There is a fine fan-vaulting, and above this an extra projection for some feet in the form of a richly-traceried hollow coving rising to the bressummer of the loft, which is enriched with vine leaf. Above rises the gallery front, with a series of rectangular traceried panels, and above the loft rises a traceried pedestal for the rood, with brackets for statues of SS. Mary and John. At the south-west corner the gallery is corbelled out to give access to the door before mentioned. The whole is richly coloured and gilt, and furnishes an excellent example of a successful revival of the old glories of this feature of our mediæval churches.

Grose: "Antiquities," p. 65; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXIX, p. 16; *Som. and Dorset Notes and Queries*, March, 1905, p. 213.

**GLASTONBURY (St. John).** There are extensive remains of old screenwork now forming the backs of two pews, and the partition dividing nave from tower. These are of plain character, and consist of the lower panels of a former high screen, with a double dado-rail, containing pierced tracery of rather unusual type.



PLATE LX



ROODSCREEN, MINEHEAD CHURCH, SOMERSET



**HALSE (St. John Baptist).** This church is one which approximates very nearly to the Devonshire type. There is no chancel arch, but only a deep moulded wooden rib, marking the chancel limit in the roof. But the roodbeam with its stone corbels at the springing of the rib has been restored within recent years, and when the rood and figures are added, will give a very good effect. The beam is embattled on the upper edge, but otherwise plain. The roodscreen is very handsome, and entirely of a Devonshire pattern, the type being that classified in the Devon Association list (1903) as "Exe Valley" (Plate LVIII B).

There are five lights in the arcade to nave, and in the north-aisle section (recently added) are four more. The tracery is delicate and enriched by the incorporation of little tilting shields held between the cusps. The same feature is repeated in the tracery heads of the lower panels.

The fan-vaulting is original and perfect to nave, and has been faithfully followed in the aisle-screen, which is the work of Herbert Read, the carver, of Exeter. It has well-moulded ribs and the sides form a hollow hexagonal pyramid like most of the Devon vaultings, a good rise towards the outer edge giving elevation. The cornices are of three rows, with excellent character in the enrichments.

These are of equal width, divided by simple beads, and retaining their crestings at top and bottom. They are comparable to the cornices at Brushford, Kentisbere, etc., etc.

Until 1843 there stood in the north aisle a screen, described as being like that at Kingsbury Episcopi in character. What became of it is not known. The roodloft stairs remain in the north wall, with upper door giving access to the new loft. A feature of special interest is the aperture in the nave-wall, over the arcade, for access from one part of the loft to the other. This feature is seen occasionally in Devon and Cornwall, but is not usual in churches outside the true "West-Country" ecclesiological district.

The pulpit is modern—a fair piece of Perpendicular design—the benches are modern, and very poor, being the result of uninstructed local effort, in thin material.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 52; *Ecclesiologist*, II, p. 62.

**HIGH HAM (Plates LII and LXVI).** The roodscreen here is a glorious work, on which it is scarcely possible to lavish too high praise. Whether considered as a composition in regard to its general effect, or studied in detail it seems to represent the highest traditions of the art in this county, and to unite perfections as no other specimen can be found to do.

The proportions are stately, the lights being tall, and transomed half-way down their length—the height of the screen being shown by the fact that the doorhead is beneath the transom-rail. Tracery of the most refined Perpendicular type fills the heads, and there is tracery again below the transom. The vaulting is complete and very fine, the ribs finely moulded with carved bosses at the intersections, and the fillings richly traceried in a manner somewhat different to the Devonshire examples.

The cornices are a marvel of successful composition, combining all the luxuriance of the Devon models with a clever and complex grouping and proportioning of the members which gives them a distinctive character. The enrichments are superb. Between them the plain mouldings are clustered in a most effective manner.

Tradition has it that this screen came from Glastonbury Abbey—this does not necessarily imply that it was brought here as spoil from the dissolved monastery, but far more probably that it was carved within its walls for Abbot Selwood, who built this church in the year 1476, or for his successor. The screen dates from 1499. The cornices still show remains of colour decoration.

A notable feature in the church is the moulded rood-beam with pateræ carved upon it, which crosses the west face of the chancel wall at a height of some 8 or 10 ft. above the roodloft floor. This is seen in the illustration (Plate LI).

The rood and its attendant figures of SS. Mary and John formerly stood upon this beam : and the stumps of their pedestals can still be discovered.

The church contains a series of fine old benches with a few good poppy-heads.

The roodloft stair is on the north side of the chancel arch.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XL, p. 34 ; *ibid.*, XI, i, p. 25 ; Worth's " Guide to Somerset " ; *R.I.B.A. Journal*, 1905, Oct. 15th, p. 639 ; *A. A. Sketch Book*, XI (measured drawings and date given), Plate 11.

**HILLFARRENCE.** There was a beautiful screen in this church until the grievous vandalism which occurred in 1857 under the much abused name of " restoration." In this year the body of the church was practically rebuilt, and the screen, which was a fine specimen of the fan-vaulted order, was turned out, and sold to the owner of Nynehead Court, who, being no vandal, made the best use he could of it in the repair of Nynehead screen, etc. (*See NYNEHEAD.*) The remaining parts were taken to Nynehead Court, where they made a long sojourn, and have only recently been removed to Chipley Park, another country house in the neighbourhood, by the proprietor.

Hillfarrence Church still contains some fine carved bench-ends. The screen was described by the Camden Society in 1842 as being of very good Perpendicular work, with good groined coving, and cited as a model to church restorers.

Camden Soc., " Hints to Church Builders," 1842.

**HUISH EPISCOPI.** The screen at present in the tower-arch is the roodscreen from Enmore (Bridgwater). (*See ENMORE.*)

The chancel screen or " partition " of this church was taken down in 1774, by the decision of a vestry meeting. (*See Minutes of same, Dec. 21st, 1774.*) There is a roodloft staircase remaining with an ornamental doorway, and, until the rebuilding of the chancel within recent years, a dormer light existed here.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XL, p. 80.

**ISLE ABBOTS (St. Mary).** This church retains the lower part of the chancel screen upon which some traces of fifteenth century painting have been recently discovered. There is also a Jacobean screen in the tower archway, with other work of the same period around it.

*Church Builder*, Jan. 1909 (with illustration). *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XL, p. 26.

**KEYNSHAM (St. John Baptist).** There is a very handsome screen of oak, blackened by time, to the south aisle chapel (Plate LIII). It is of five lights, the central one being an open doorway, like those at Long Ashton, with a pointed-arched head, enriched by three orders of cusping, this triple feathering giving a great richness and delicacy of appearance. The side compartments are arcaded, and have good Perpendicular tracery, but these are set within a rectangular head, the spandrels being traceried in harmony with the rest. The mullions have no band or cap. This is an early feature. There are some pretty clustered buttress-form appendages to the main posts. The spandrels to the central opening are large, and filled with excellent carving. Along the head of the screen is a magnificent band of enrichment, which exhibits all the choicest qualities of its kind. Its convexity is specially notable, and gives a richer quality than most. Above this is a very fine coving, panelled, with moulded ribs and between each rib a bronze star with rays, sixteen in number, and at top is a splendid cornice with its ancient enrichments, the whole forming an exquisite composition.

This screen is the only surviving section of a series (similar to those at Long Ashton and elsewhere) which once spanned the church. The others were destroyed by the fall of an ancient north-east tower, about the year 1634. The screen in point of detail, as well as general arrangement, may be compared with those at Long Ashton, but a comparison will show that it is far superior in design and workmanship. It is probably also quite fifty years earlier in date.

PLATE LXI



ROODSCREEN, NORTON FITZWARREN, SOMERSET



The fall of the tower in the seventeenth century necessitated the erection of a new screen, and one was constructed in the reign of Charles I to supply its place. This has now been removed to cover the archway on the south side of chancel, where it acts as a screen for the organ. It has the usual early seventeenth century character, but is rather commonplace in design and rough in execution.

"Church Builder," I, p. 8.

**KILMERSDON (SS. Peter and Paul).** The roodscreen has disappeared, and in its place is a screen of hammered iron, very good of its kind, but looking singularly out of place beside the beautiful old stone screen which fills the arch on the north side of the chancel-opening.

The latter (Fig. 85) is a magnificent piece of work, full of rich early Perpendicular detail. It is of three divisions, each of two lights with pointed arches in the head containing lesser arches formed by the tracery fork. All the work is enriched with feathered cusping. The doorway is beneath a heavily-feathered ogee supporting the central mullion. The cornice is deep and rich with four angels corbelled on the face, one over each main division. Below the transom-rail are four openings with traceried heads, each now provided with a grid. The screen does not appear to fit its position, and there is a local tradition that it was brought here from old St. Andrew's, Holborn. We are not aware that this report is in any way authenticated, and it appears improbable in any case that "Holborn" can be correct.

The responds of the chancel arch appear to be prepared for the reception of a screen (probably also of stone) and there are mutilated remains of canopied niches on each side of the arch.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXX, p. 63.

**KILTON.** The scanty remains of an old screen are now incorporated with a wretched modern affair, in pitch-pine. The old part consists of a plainly-moulded oak-head bearing some flat pateræ—poorly executed, and of no great interest.

**KILVE.** There are some slight remains of the roodscreen now employed as a doorway below the western gallery, leading from the church into the tower. The character of the fenestration is like that of Stockland Bristol.

**KING'S BROMPTON (St. Mary).** There stood in this church, until comparatively recent years a fine screen, with arcaded lights and fan-vaulting, having its roodloft which contained some original panels.

Unfortunately, when the church underwent a somewhat drastic restoration some thirty or forty years ago, the screen was removed and deposited in the vicarage stable-loft. Upon the resignation of the then Vicar some years later, all his goods were sold, and the greater part bought by a woman broker of Tiverton, who, without any authority, claimed and removed the screen, and it has since been impossible to discover any trace of it, in spite of the earnest endeavours of the present Vicar and his churchwardens. Dr. Cox remembers that the screen was fan-vaulted. Other particulars are communicated by the present Vicar.

In the *Ecclesiologist* for 1845 (Vol. IV, p. 246), it is described as a magnificent roodscreen and loft, barbarously whitewashed, and the carvings of the lower panels reversed above the loft.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, L. II.

**KINGSBURY EPISCOPI (St. Martin).** The central portion of the roodscreen alone remains. It is said to have formerly extended across the church. The type is one peculiar to Somerset, and may be compared with that of High Ham, but is of much later and more meagre design, poor in execution and detail of tracery.

It contains, however, some very good panels in the lower part carved with fruit and foliage designs in rather low relief, but very spirited and effective, with quatrefoils above having enriched spandrels forming square frames. These panels are of late date, probably a Jacobean imitation of Gothic work.

The upper part of the screen was restored about 1843. It was one of the earliest works undertaken by the Camden Society. As might be expected of that date, the fan-vaulting is not a success, but a very crude attempt, each fan having two faces only, perfectly plain. The tracery is spidery, and of inferior character, but there is excellent work in the cornices. Viewed as a whole, however, the work presents a good appearance.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XL, p. 42, and XI, p. 18.

**LANGFORD BUDVILLE.** The roodscreen is gone, but evidence of its former glory remains in the decoration of the nave ceiling over the chancel-threshold.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXVIII, p. 49.

**LANGPORT.** No screenwork remains, but the roodloft turret stands at the N.E. angle of the nave—and there are indications in the east pier of a former chapel enclosure (aisle-screen and parclose) with a squint in the north side of the chancel arch.

**LIMINGTON (St. Mary).** There remains in the chancel-opening the lower part of a screen, with large panels filled with linen-fold ornament. The work appears rather late in date. Two ancient pews were described in an early number of the *Somerset Archaeological Proceedings* as bearing heraldic panels, and having formed part of a screen. The roodloft stair is on the north side of the nave.

The church contains some fine carved bench-ends.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, VII, ii, pp. 4, 5 and 7, sketch of figs. and panel; *ibid.*, XXXII, p. 74.

**LONG ASHTON (All Saints).** The roodscreen is in three divisions, uniform in height and in general appearance, but varying considerably in detail. The screens are of a florid and remarkable type peculiar to this county, dating from about 1480, associated with a local class of churches with lofty aisles intermediate in character between the true West-Country church, and the average Midland or South-Midland type. (Plate LXIIIb.)

The lights contain tracery set in a rectangular framework, but the arcaded form of opening is well marked within the traceried compartments. The framework is well moulded, whilst on the face of the uprights the buttress-form of enrichment takes the place of the grouped shafts with moulded cap which is generally a feature of the groined screens. This screen, of course, had a continuous hollow coving along the head.

The tracery of the nave-screen (which has four two-light bays each side of the central opening), is something like Wrington—that of the aisle-screens is more like the usual Perpendicular—and these have each two *three-light* divisions each side of the centre.

The doorways are notable features, the arched heads having most elaborate and complex featherings, with major and minor cusps all heavily foliated, giving a very rich appearance. The doors to these screens, all now missing, would have been low doors only, probably no higher than the dado-rail.

The roodloft having disappeared, its magnificent head-rail with bold convex vine-leaf enrichments and tall crest was brought down and superimposed upon the cornice proper, so that now the screen-heads appear to possess double cornices, the upper member being fully as rich and deep as the cornice itself. The effect of these screens, with their wealth of gold and colour (restored shortly before 1829) is very fine, and their enrichments being of a high order, merit careful study. A similar arrangement of screenwork may be seen at Wrington, or Chew Magna, where the sections are disconnected. At Keynsham one section only remains.

Rutter's "North-West Somerset," p. 14; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XVII, p. 45; *Ecclesiologist*, III, p. 28.



**LONG SUTTON (Holy Trinity).** The roodscreen is standing, together with continuations to both aisles of equal height and similar design ; but the three sections are completely divided by the stonework of the nave arcade. Anciently these sections were in some manner united, as the loft undoubtedly overran the whole length, and the three screens still retain their fan-vaulting and cornices, which exhibit some good vine-leaf ornament, and another rather unusual variety of foliage. Bloxam describes the church as having in his day "a splendid wooden roodloft, elaborately carved, painted, and gilt, which extends across the whole breadth of the church, and is approached by means of a staircase turret on the south side of the church." This turret-stair was built at a date subsequent to 1490. The screen itself is of late character, *circa* 1520, rather poor in detail as compared with such specimens as Trent, High Ham, etc., and appears to have suffered grievously by unskillful renovation. The colour decorations are not happy, the effect of the twist on the nosing beads of the mullions, and on the vaulting ribs, being anything but good, and inspiring grave doubts as to the fidelity of the restoration in this particular. (Plate L.)

The original vaulting seems to have disappeared, as the present work is inferior in execution, and poor to the point of meanness in design—indeed, absolutely destitute of character. It is wrong in form, having no rise from the apex of the lights outward to the cornice, which is such an important feature of the old work. The panels in the lower part of the screen are also absolutely plain ; whereas some display of ornament in this position is well-nigh universal in screens of this class and date, although we have exceptions at Norton Fitzwarren and Chew Magna. But the worst feature of the whole is the coarse modern coving with its cheap and heavy cornice, and distorted Victorian angels on the hollow panels overhanging the west front of the screen. This erection ruins the old proportions, and nothing can be said in favour of an addition at once so pretentious and so obviously cheap, save that it has enabled the organs to be re-instated in the position rightfully theirs, both before and after Reformation changes. Over the roodloft the nave-ceiling still retains its ancient coloured ornament. The pulpit (Plate LIX) is a magnificent piece of sixteenth-century work (date 1530) beautifully proportioned, the sides being covered with finely-canopied niche-work. It is of the same class as those at Castle Cary and Queen Camel. The statues are unfortunately missing. The font cover is Jacobean.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XL., p. 38 ; Dollman's "Pulpits" ; Bloxam's "Gothic Architecture", II, 40.

**LOW HAM.** This church, which is a building of Carolean date, *temp.* 1620, and of unusual interest from the fact that it is entirely designed in imitation of the churches of the pre-Reformation days, contains a well-proportioned chancel screen of oak, exhibiting some good detail. The screen is complete without any provision for a loft, the cornice being very rich and perfect. The running enrichments and cresting are works of singular beauty and originality, recalling the best traditions of the art. Upon a band along the west side are carved in Gothic letters the words "My sonne, fear God and the Kinge, and meddle not with them that are given to change"—and along the east, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." (Fig. 80, p. 116, *ante*.)

Beneath these, at the junction of the four main uprights of the screen, are placed winged cherubs covering the intersections, and between these over the heads of the openings, other smaller ones, making seven on each side. The lights are filled with quaint tracery of quasi-Perpendicular design, but showing to what a great degree the art had been lost, as they are really nothing but a species of fretwork having but a superficial resemblance to the genuine Gothic work, and betraying a curious ignorance of its principles. The effect on the whole is quite beautiful, this defect being noticeable only on detailed examination.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XL, p. 32 ; *R.I.B.A. Journal*, Vol. XII, No. 20 (Oct. 14th, 1905), pp. 655-6.

**LOXTON (St. Andrew).** The screen here forms the sole distinction between nave and sanctuary. It is of curiously rude and debased workmanship, all the detail being degraded (Fig. 86). The lower panels show the linen-fold pattern, which the others of the "North Somerset" order do not.

**LUCCOMBE (St. Mary).** The chancel screen was taken down in the "forties" of the last century, when a considerable re-fitting and alteration of the church, on mean lines, was carried out by the incumbent. The best parts of the lower tracery of the screen were used as a reredos, or rather, a sanctuary-panelling, right across the east end of the chancel, behind the altar. Another row of carving was fitted in front of the western or singers' gallery. Parts of this tracery was in deal, painted in imitation of dark oak. There is no doubt that this screen had a regular roodloft with panelled and traceried front, to which access was had by a stair in the north wall. It had no fan-vaulting, and the style of the tracery was something like that of Culbone or East Quantoxhead. Probably the form taken by the roodloft was that of a horizontal coving or hollow ceiling, to the westward, there being a beam across to carry the loft on this side. Anyhow, there is no doubt that there was a roodloft here prior to Rev. T. Fisher's "restoration."

Many portions of the old work were used up in a subsequent "restoration" in the making of a new low screen, but a good deal more was thrown away at that time.

Mr. Buckle reported in May, 1894, that portions of the roodscreen were found beneath the flooring, retaining sufficient old colour to show that the structure must originally have presented a very ornamental appearance, but there was not enough to establish the design, either of structure or decoration. The old work which had been applied in the earlier restoration to the gallery and altar-back had since been used up for the new low screen to the chancel. The pulpit and reading-desk were described in 1889 at the visit of the Somerset Society, as being fine specimens of late woodwork. *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXV, p. 32; notes by Dr. J. C. Cox, F.S.A.

**LYDEARD ST. LAWRENCE.** There are two screens in this church, both being originally of the fan-vaulted order, but having long since lost their vaulting and upper enrichments. A few years ago they were both in a melancholy state, that in the north aisle especially being deplorably mutilated, and little more than the skeleton of a screen.

The nave-screen was rather better, but in addition to the loss of the upper parts, the doors had also gone. What remained showed five bays, filled with Perpendicular tracery, the lights being unusually long, through the lowness of the dado-rail. The lower panels are fitted with beautiful tracery of the most delicate description, showing a fine reticulation of flowing lines forming a network of quatrefoils holding carved lozenges between the cusps—the same sort of work may be seen at Bishop's Lydeard, Milverton, Wiveliscombe, etc., and shows an inspiration more foreign than English. This screen is now partially restored by the addition of a good cornice, with handsome vine-leaf enrichment, and cresting—but the vaulting is sadly wanted, as the whole space between the lights and the cornice is a flat and unsightly blank. The pulpit is a remarkably fine Elizabethan one, and the bench-ends are superb sixteenth century work. The roodloft stair is on the north side of the church.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 64; Camden Society, "Hints to Church Builders," 1842.

**LYNG.** The screen has gone, but there are indications of a former partition between nave and chancel, the face of the arch on the western side having no moulding, but being constructed to receive a solid "tympanum" or filling above the screen. The roodloft stair is on the north side. The church retains a fine carved pulpit, in which old benches are incorporated, also a series of bench-ends *in situ* with grotesque figures upon them.

Jeboult's "West Somerset" (1873), II, p. 61; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XLIII, p. 51; note by E. Buckle.

PLATE LXII

TYPES OF SCREENWORK IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND NORTH SOMERSET



(A) ROODSCREEN, ASHCHURCH (GLOS.)



(B) SCREEN IN PHTON CHURCH, SOMERSET



**MARK (St. Mark).** This church contains screenwork of Perpendicular character, but of Post-Reformation date (1634).

**MARSTON MAGNA (St. Mary).** The roodscreen has disappeared, though the staircase to the roodloft remains. There is a light screen of sixteenth century date, containing some Renaissance detail, now standing in the archway to the chantry chapel.

**MELLS.** This church had originally a very lofty chancel screen in keeping with the stately proportions of the fabric; as is evidenced by the great height of the doorway of access to the roodloft, which still remains in the wall on the north side of the chancel arch. A number of carved traceried panels from the old screen remain, and are incorporated with the lectern, altar-rails, credence-table, book-rest over same, and elsewhere, but the present chancel screen, which was reconstructed in 1881, is virtually a new composition, and can hardly be commended as a design, since it not only fails to reproduce the ancient character of screens in this neighbourhood, but fails to exhibit that grace and lightness of design which the old work shows. The lights are headed by very ponderous canopies of depressed ogee pattern, singularly heavy and clumsy, and this feature mars the good effect of the tracery work above, which is excellent. There is a rood upon the screen several sizes too big for it.

The parclose and aisle-screens are the really interesting feature of this church. Here we have a really scholarly and artistic reconstruction incorporating a number of panels, apparently ancient, the design of which accords to some extent with the rest of the series, though it has points of originality. (Fig. 86.)

The church was originally seated with Jacobean benches, having tall ends of striking and original character, but at a recent date the writer saw these relegated to the vestry, where they were acting as a wall-panelling, excepting a few still *in situ* at the west end of the church.

**MERE (St. Michael).** Although this church is in Wilts, a descriptive list of Somerset screens would be imperfect without reference to the roodscreen here, as it belongs by virtue of its character entirely to the group of Somerset screens of which High Ham, Queen Camel, and Trent are the principal surviving specimens. Of these, it is most nearly like that of Queen Camel, being quite a sister screen in its proportions. It is very perfect, and a work of great dignity. (Plate XXXIb.)

Within recent years the roodloft gallery has been replaced, together with the beam with the great Rood and attendant images, as in former days, which gives it a great distinction and grandeur of appearance, and enables one to realise the old-time effect.

Before the restoration of this church, the chancel arch was filled with a partition or tympanum probably Post-Reformation in date, and this no doubt displayed the Tables of the Law, with figures of Moses and Aaron, etc., as was the custom.

In the north-aisle arch is a much older screen, of massive character, with Decorated tracery, formerly, it is believed, the roodscreen of the church, but displaced on the erection of its more magnificent neighbour in the fifteenth century (*circa* 1450). The bridge which gives access to the loft, and unites the two screens at varying levels, is ornamented with several coats of arms and a merchants' mark on original panels, indicating (says Rev. J. A. Lloyd) the contributors to the cost of the reconstruction of the church in 1450. The roof over the roodloft is enriched with painted panels. On the organ-loft in the north chantry is the original doorway to the bridge leading to the roodloft, and under this, in the fine oak parclose which fills the arch towards chancel-side, is a curious squint cut diagonally through one of the mullions of the screen. Here "Gerard the Bedeman" used to take his stand to see the proper moment to ring the Sacring Bell (through the squint), and pull the organ bellows. Similar fine parclofes fence the chancel on

the south side, filling the arches right to their apex. The chancel contains stalls for the four chantry priests, the Rector and Vicar on south side. They have carved subsellæ.

On the north side of the chancel is a recess for Easter sepulchre, and an arch raised for an organ-loft in the fifteenth century. Half of the panels of the roodloft parapet on the east side are original. The churchwardens' accounts mention the whitewashing of figures of the Twelve Apostles which were painted on twelve of the western panels, in the centre being probably St. Michael, to whom the church is dedicated. These were defaced in 1560. The rood-beam is in its original hole, and retains the old corbel on the south side, but the wall having been rebuilt on the north side above the screen did not show the holes for beam and corbel.

Rev. J. A. Lloyd says that the screens of Mere and Queen Camel were the work of a guild of carvers who executed both at about the same time; and they are in their main features identical in design.

Previous to the erection of the rood-beam, a rood had been fixed to the western balcony of the loft, but it looked so out of place that the Vicar and his architect instituted a search for the sockets of the old beam—which, together with the corbel, soon came to light on the south side.

The loft here is 6 feet 11 ins. wide, and contained in the centre, a small altar, with a marble slab upon it, for daily celebrations by chantry priests, which is now lost. Within recent years there was a heavy high pew on the loft.

The screen had on its north side several small painted shields bearing charges as follows: (1) A Merchant's Mark; (2) Clyvedon; (3) Caraunt; (4) Baynton; (5) Hungerford; (6) Prince of Wales; (7) St. George's Cross; (8) Berkeley; (9) Stourton; (10) Hungerford (with mullet for difference); (11) St. Bartholomew's Hospital; (12) Caraunt (with crescent); (13) Wadham; (14) Bettesthorpe.<sup>1</sup> The Trinity shield and Arms of Chichester are mentioned by Rev. J. A. Lloyd.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, IX (1859), p. 23, *et seq.*; "The Church of S. Michael the Archangel, Mere, Wilts," by Rev. J. A. Lloyd, F.S.A.; notes by Rev. J. A. Lloyd; *Wilts Archæol. Mag.*, xxix, p. 22; Aubrey's "Wilts"; Hoare's "Wilts."

**MIDDLEZOY (Holy Cross).** There is a rather good chancel screen in black oak, of the High Ham type, but simple and plainer. Its lower parts are well preserved, but it has lost all its cornice enrichments. Until a comparatively recent date it was placed further to the westward, in line with the front edge of the chancel arch, but has now been shifted back so that it shows the front of the arch, and the work is badly done. There is a Jacobean pulpit.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XLIII, p. 47.

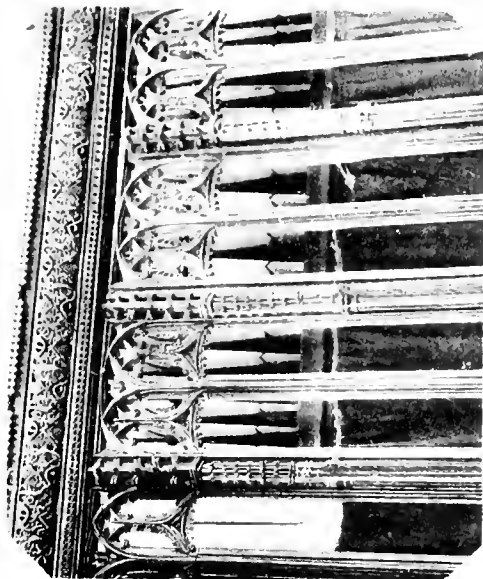
**MILBORNE PORT (St. John the Evangelist).** The church contains a fifteenth century screen, of Perpendicular style, remarkable for its having retained its coved top—or canopy—to the roodloft. It is of kindred type to the screen at High Ham, in respect of its traceried lights. It stands in a side arch.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XVI (1870), p. 36; Worth's "Guide to Somerset," p. 140.

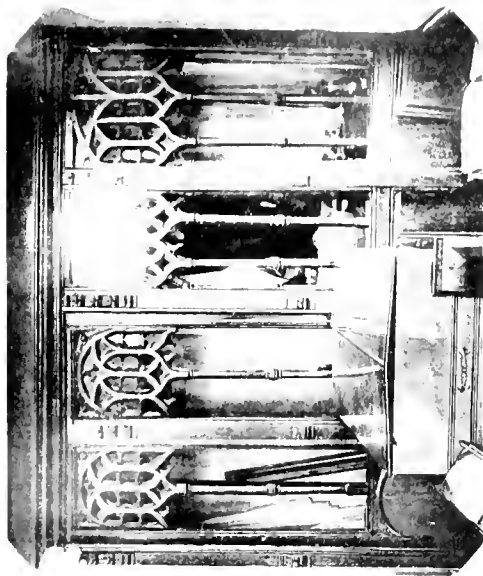
**MILVERTON (St. Michael).** The roodscreen is modern—a memorial, dated 1903. It incorporates a number of old panels in the lower portion. These are the centres of bench-ends, cut round, and the bottoms sawn off, cutting the tracery panels they contain, and spoiling their appearance. In the new screen abundant height has been allowed for the proper restoration of these panels to their full length, but this has not been done, and the absurd mistake has been made of sticking them in, in their mutilated state and filling up the space below with the conventional Devonshire ornament of a row of quatrefoils. The result is a hopeless

<sup>1</sup> Aubrey's "Wilts." Hoare's "Wilts" gives the series very differently arranged, and the Chichester and Trinity Arms do not appear in it.

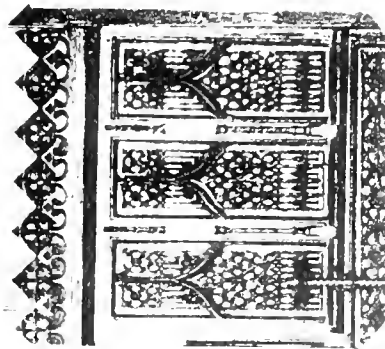
# PLATE LXIII EXAMPLES OF SOMERSET SCREENWORK



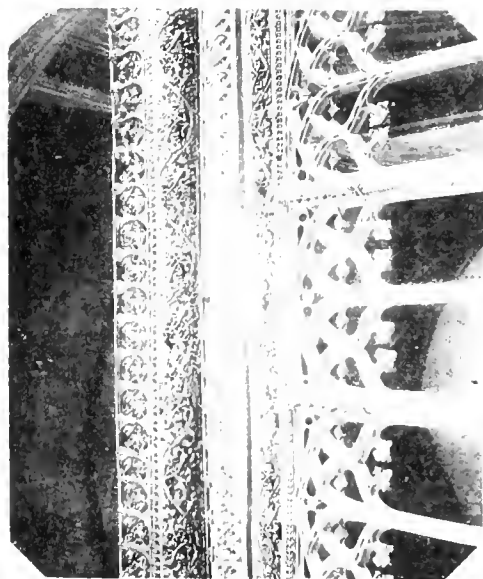
(A) WRINGTON



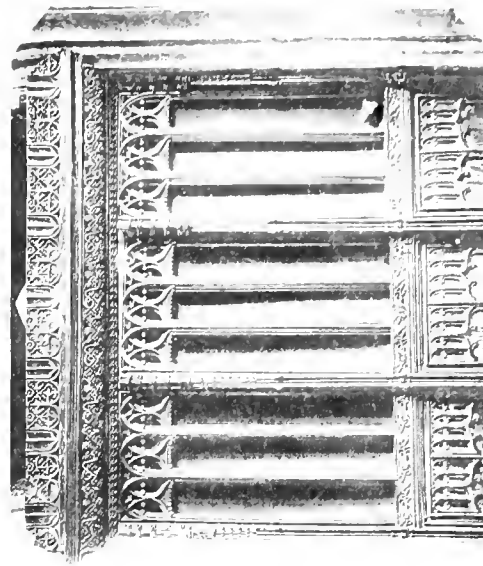
(B) THORN ST. MARGARETS



(C) RUISHTON



(D) LONG ASHTON



(E) WHITCHURCH





incongruity. The new parts of the screen have some dignity of proportion on the west side, but it is a complete sham, as it presents to the nave the appearance of a fully-roined roodloft screen, whereas the back is perfectly flat, and there is no gallery, nor space for one at top. Another unsatisfactory feature is that the lights are too long, and are without mullions, the tracery being stopped with pendants at the springing. The fan-vaulting is of unorthodox type with multitudinous small ribs set to a circular sweep, and intersecting with a curved soffit-rib not found upon any old screens, except Fitzhead, which is, however, very different. The cornice to the west side is fairly good, but on the east the finish is very meagre—there is no cornice worth mentioning, only rows of patera ornament one above another, and no mouldings to the screen itself, except a single chamfer to the tracery, and one ogee on the frame.

There is an old panel fitted into the most southerly compartment of the screen, which probably gives the date when the oak work in the church was completed. It is inscribed: "The Yere of Oure Lorde God MDXL." Like the rest, it was probably part of a bench-end. Among the others are several grotesques, deeply cut, occupying the upper part of the panels, the lower section being Gothic tracery—but this has lost more than a third of its length. Among the grotesques are the griffin, dragon, and unicorn. The whole of the nave of the church is pewed with similar designs—a complete set—and the aisles have also a fair number left. The bench-fronts to the gangways are remarkable for their excellent series of figures in high relief set in the panels, and there is an even better series in the chancel-stalls, which portray the Apostles, for the most part—but among the figures on the north side is one of the Blessed Virgin treading on the Serpent, very finely cut and really a noteworthy example. The figure holds a book in the right hand, and in the left a cup, out of which rises a dragon's or serpent's head, which are the usual symbols of St. John. The choir-stalls have a very good appearance, with their fine poppy-heads, but much of their framework is modern.

In the vestry are more of the old panels, in which this church is singularly rich. One of the best bench-ends exhibited the royal arms (in garter) of Henry VIII, with the royal badge of England and Arragon—the Rose and Pomegranate.

Many of the bench-ends are beautifully cut with a fine ornament of Flemish appearance, very like what remains at Wiveliscombe, though a little coarser in execution.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXVIII, p. 52; Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 65.

**MINEHEAD (St. Michael)** (Plate LX). This church possesses a remarkably fine roodscreen of the fan-vaulted type similar in its general appearance to that of Dunster Church and probably erected about the same time or shortly after. The date, 1500, will therefore be an approximately correct one for this screen.<sup>1</sup> In 1842 there was a parciose screen of character agreeing with the roodscreen in the church. (Camden Society's "Hints to Church Builders.") Much of the detail is the same as at Dunster, but the tracery in the panels of the vaulting is different, as is also that in the lower compartments of the screen. The cornices are very good, presenting three rows of vine-leaf enrichment between the beads on the western face of the beam, and the hanging cresting is particularly fine. But the upper crest has disappeared.

The tracery in the lights is believed to be a faithful reproduction of the old, but unfortunately during a lengthy period of neglect, when one part of the church was given up to the use of school children, the openings became denuded of their tracery. It was perfect in 1842. The curious low segmental curve of the heads will be marked. Though appearing scarcely so graceful as the true four-centred arch, this form was often preferred in connection with these vaulted screens, since it allowed of a better development of the ribs of the vaulting at their springing, and by rendering their curve flatter and more uniform, enabled the workers to cut the

<sup>1</sup> Agnes Smyth, by will proved 15th January, 1532, left 20d. "to the Rode of Minehead Church."

whole height of the vaulting panels out of one solid piece of oak, without undue sacrifice of material.

A small feature in the Minehead screen is worthy of note. Attached to the standard on the north side of the chancel doorway (to the west) is a small bracket and niche for a statuette, possibly that of the patron saint, or in connection with a former altar immediately to the north of the door.

The Minehead roodloft is approached by a staircase of unusual dimensions—quite a broad flight, winding around a semi-octagonal bay of large proportions, having a large mullioned window in it. Several suggestions as to the purpose of this have been made, all more or less unsatisfactory. Probably ceremonial (*i.e.*, processional) use can best explain it. The loft itself is unusually wide, a fact which must be considered in connection with the wide approach. It spans eight feet, whereas the normal width of such lofts is about six feet. The loft at Minehead is one of those whose use has been perpetuated, though in a manner quite other than that designated by its pious founders, until recent times. Like so many others in the West, it was turned into a pew for school children or grown-ups. Many of the fine old ornamental fronts to these lofts, though condemned by Elizabeth's Commissioners, were nevertheless retained in the West by the people, who loved them, and only disappeared when completely worn out by hard use.

In the case of Minehead the churchwardens' accounts show that the loft was thus re-used and fitted with seats in 1630. The following entries are quoted, as of general interest :

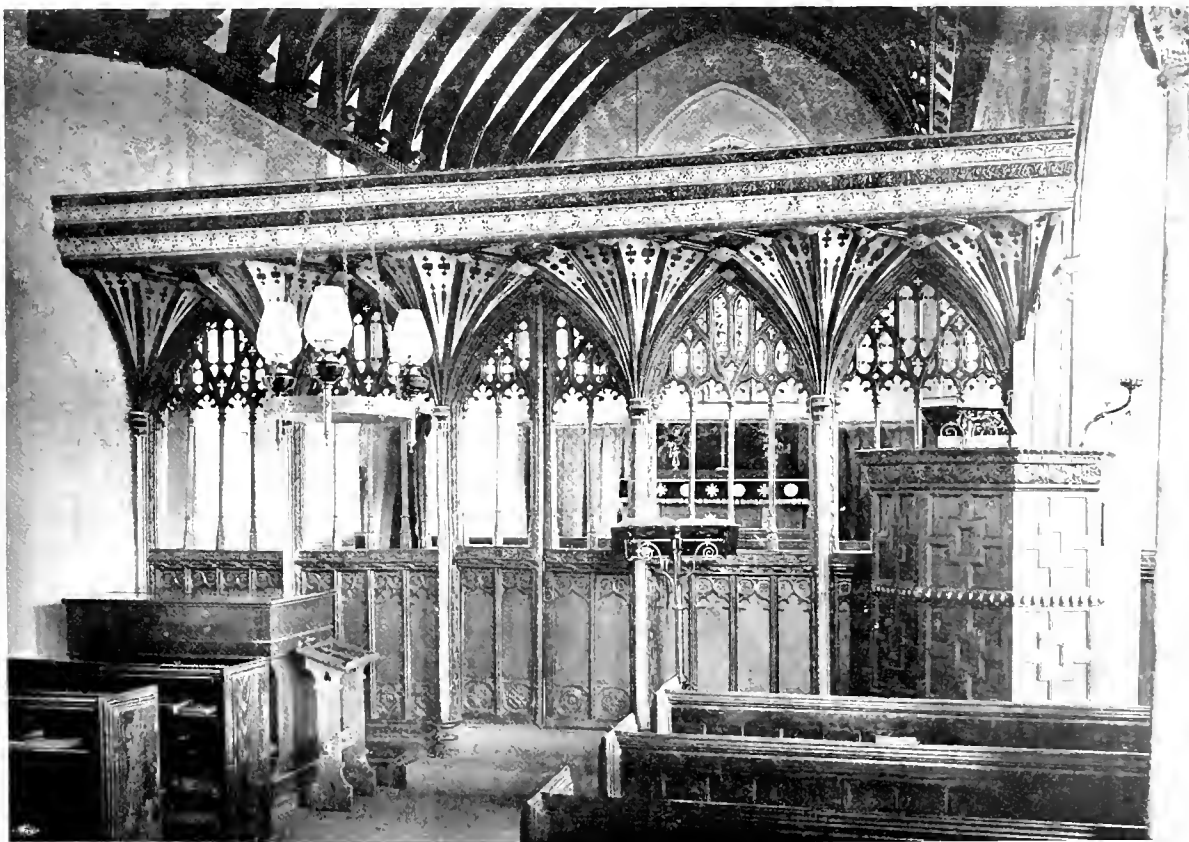
- "For nailes, rales, boardes, etc., for the work about the roodloft .. .. 4s. 1d."  
 "For a painting of the Kinge's Armes and other work .. .. 13s. 4d."  
 And in 1639-40 : "For new placing the Kinge's Armes :  
 "For mending the stayre window.  
 "Conrad Clark, for taking downe and whitenynge the Kinge's Armes in the  
     roodloft .. .. . 2s. 6d."  
 "For setting up on the screen again .. .. . 2s."  
 1660. "Pd. for taking down the Kinge's Armes .. .. . 2s."  
 1660. "Pd. for beere when we agreed with the painter to draw the King's  
     Armes (the old tablet was too mutilated to go up again. The  
     frame for the new one was made at Minehead, and sent to  
     Bridgwater to receive the picture).  
     " Pd. the painter for drawinge the Kinge's Armes and setting them up  
     in the church .. .. . £5 14s. 8d."  
 1684. " Pd. for timber, bordes and work about the skreens .. .. £1 5s. 0d."  
 1743-4. " Pd. Putting up the King's Arms .. .. . £2 17s. 0d."  
     " Pd. Richard Phelps (painter, of Bridgwater) painting Kinge's Arms  
     (And 9d. for beere)."  
 1790-1. " The pew over the screen let, for the term of their lives, to six persons."

Photographs are extant taken before the last restorations (*i.e.*, prior to 1886), which show a plain panelling, apparently of Georgian date, upon the screen. Dr. Cox says the seats remained and were used by the school children up to the restoration in 1887-9.

Camden Society's "Hints to Church Builders," 1842; S. Kensington list of Painted Screens; *Athenæum*, Sept. 29th, 1906 ("Churches of the Carhampton Hundred," Dr. Cox, F.S.A.); *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXV (1889), p. 15; *ibid.*, LII, pp. 19-24, 57 and 67; Minehead Churchwardens' Accounts; *Archtl. Assoc. Sketchbook*, Vol. IV, pp. 28-31 (measured drawings showing screen and modern gallery over, detail of cornices, Jacobean pulpit, and Altar Table).



(A) ROODSCREEN, TRULL, SOMERSET



(B) ROODSCREEN, FIMELKSCOMBE, SOMERSET



**MONKSILVER (All Saints).** The screen now standing as a chancel screen is not the original roodscreen. This was sold by the churchwardens in Taunton many years ago, probably before 1844, when it is believed that the existing work was established in its place, on the occasion of the restoration described in the *Ecclesiologist*. The original screen was a fan-vaulted one: the present one being a parclose screen removed from the Lady Chapel in the south aisle. It has been a good deal renovated, and the tracery-heads appear to have been altered, but the lower panels contain some excellent work.

The pulpit is a beautiful example of late wood-carving, with a strong Flemish feeling in the detail. The class of work is the same as is found in the screens at Lydeard St. Lawrence and Bishop's Lydeard; at Whitestaunton, in a similar position, and also at Wiveliscombe, and Milverton. The bench-ends in this church are beautifully carved, showing much originality of design. They are very complete.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 70; *Ecclesiologist*, III, 157; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, LII.

**NEMPNETT THRUBWELL.** The church possesses a handsome modern roodscreen of three bays, fan-vaulted, and containing in its arcades tracery of a rather flamboyant order. The roodloft is adorned by several statues after the designs of the elder Pugin.

**NETTLECOMBE.** The screen has gone, but there are some old panels worked into a western belfry gallery over a modern screen. The pulpit is of Queen Anne date. The great feature of this church is its wonderful font.

**NORTH NEWTON (St. Peter).** The church contains a finely carved and very massive chancel screen of Post-Reformation date, and a splendid pulpit to match, both being the gift of Sir Thomas Wrothe (*temp.* Charles I). The screen has five large arched openings, with semi-circular heads, clear of tracery—and is richly ornamented with bold carving. There is a massive cornice. A screen of almost identical character is to be seen at Thurloxton, the next village.

North Newton Church also contains a carved door to the vestry, known as the "Parable" door, as it shows a quaint sculptured representation elaborately wrought, of the parable of the Ten Virgins. It also has other symbolic carvings of the True Vine; the Bread of Life; and the Holy Dove. The pillars of the screen are carved with figures representing (1) Faith, with her shield; (2) Hope, with her anchor; (3) Charity, with a Dove; (4) A quaint and literal representation of S. Luke i, 35. Some antiquaries consider (3) to represent St. Peter, the patron saint, holding a cock. The date of the screen is probably 1626-28. The pulpit is of richly moulded and beautifully-carved oak, with handsome panels of the "Jewel" period. This screen reflects the High Church feeling of the Laudian days.

Monograph by Rev. L. H. King, M.A., Vicar.

**NORTH STOKE.** Before the church was renovated, the chancel was divided from the nave by a solid wall or screen in which were two window-lights and a door.

Tunstall, "Rambles about Bath," p. 196.

**NORTON FITZWARREN (All Saints).** The roodscreen (Plate LXI) is of fine Perpendicular work, dating from the end of the fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup> It has been a good deal altered, having been restored about 1870, and again renovated since. Mentioned in 1842 as having "a magnificent roodloft, it was one of those listed by the Camden Society as a model for future use. At this date a parclose screen also existed. In 1825 the screen was covered with an oak graining. The church underwent some alterations about the end of the eighteenth century, when the roodloft stair, which was on the north side, was removed (Jeboult).

<sup>1</sup> 1500 seems a probable date. The name of Ralphe Harris, Churchwarden, is carved upon it, and has been thought to be evidence of local execution.

As the work stands at present it consists of five bays, the two extreme being narrower than those next the door—being two-light openings, whilst the others are four-light. The tracery of the arcades is very curious, the mullions running up uninterruptedly into the heads, with pinnaced buttress-form attachments on face, trefoiled ogees springing from the sides of same, with prettily-carved canopy work above them, forming a series of little gables between the upright divisions in lieu of tracery proper. The doorway has a very beautiful head, a depressed ogee in form, richly crocketed above. The doors remain. The panels beneath the transom-rail are moulded with plain rectangular heads, like Pawlett, Chew Magna, etc., but this is an uncommon finish. The screen is fan-vaulted and of unusual type. It has not the orthodox rise towards the outer edge, consequently the cornices come down too heavily over the fenestrations, giving a heavy look, and hard shadow.

There is a very interesting form of ornament in the fillings of the vaulting, and one quite unusual in the county—namely, a series of small embossed stars, probably executed in gesso. The only other places in Somerset, so far as we are aware, in which this feature may be seen, are Bishop's Lydeard and Trull. The cornices, as they now stand, consist of four rows of rich ornament, the lowest, cut in the solid, exhibiting the legend of the Dragon of Rhodes and his victims.<sup>1</sup> Above this come three rows of foliage ornament, the first and third being vine-leaf, and the second, a water crowfoot, or some similar plant. The lower vine-leaf band is of exceptional beauty and originality, free in design, and very well cut. Above the screen are a modern rood with the crucified figure and attendant images of SS. Mary and John, very creditably carved, but the rood being quite plain, looks coarse above this fine screen with all its delicate workmanship.

(2) There is another vaulted screen in the north aisle similar to the roodscreen in character. The vaulting is original and perfect on the west side of both these screens, but missing on the east side. All the forms and details are unlike the local work. The ribs of the vaulting are not mitred. The panels run out to the bressummer. The bosses show the rose in splendour.

(3) There is a fine parclose screen with tracery similar to that of the other screens. All show traces of ancient colour and gilding.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 67; Notes by Rev. C. H. Heale; Worth's "Guide to Somerset"; Camden Society, "Hints to Church Builders," 1842; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XVIII, p. 42, with legend of dragon; *ibid.*, Vol. LIV (1908), p. 146.

**NORTON ST. PHILIP (SS. Philip and All Saints).** There is no roodscreen, but in each aisle there stands a high screen of carved oak, rather elaborate, but not of the best period either in design or workmanship. They are, in fact, a sort of debased imitation of Gothic work, and may very probably date from the seventeenth century.

**NUNNEY (All Saints).** This church, which has been barbarously treated and modernised internally, yet contains a feature of great interest in the arrangement of its chancel opening in which a portion of a very beautiful screen fortunately survives.

The chancel arch here is narrower by several feet than the chancel itself, and the balance of space on either side is utilised for the formation of hagioscopes. These take the form of small traceried window-openings, and belong to a very interesting series, representing in varied forms,

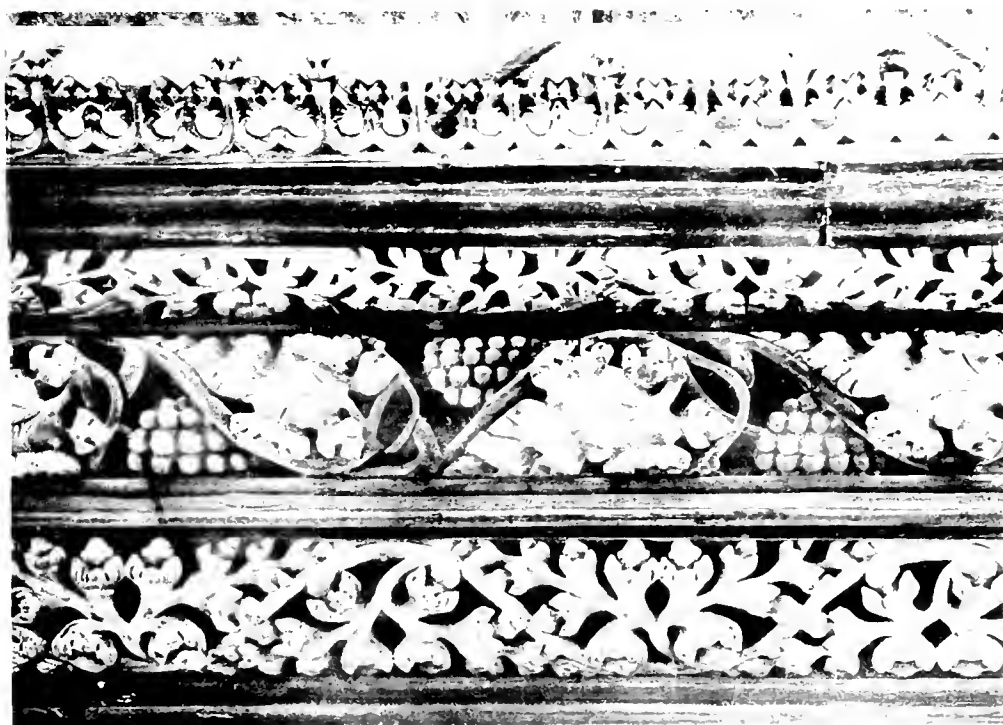
<sup>1</sup> It is stated by a local antiquary that this ornament was placed upon the screen by a late incumbent, who bought it in an old furniture shop in Taunton. Records say that many old screens and rich carved work were sent in to Taunton to be sold, after the edict of Archbishop Parker, and Taunton was full of this work.

PLATE LXV

CORNICE ENRICHMENTS IN DEVON AND SOMERSET SCREENWORK



(A) UFFCULME, DEVON



(B) TRENT, SOMERSET





an arrangement traditional in the English Church, and probably eastern in its origin (*vide* previous section).

The screen is of the true North Somerset type, but richer in its detail, and finer in execution than most. There are the usual narrow rectangular lights (Fig. 86), but the alternate mullions have been removed, and pendants substituted, probably in the seventeenth century, whilst the original lower panels have been replaced by later substitutes, of a sort of coarse fretwork.

The cornice enrichments are singularly fine, and there is a magnificent and most original cresting, of tall proportions, offering a first-rate example for reproduction. The doors are perfect, and contain some beautiful tracery-heads under a depressed arch. Above them are a pair of excellent carved spandrels, in rich relief. Altogether, such original work as remains on this screen is worthy of special note.<sup>1</sup>

*Som. Arch. Proc.* XXXIX, p. 34.

The screen was removed some years ago, and sent to Frome, but in consequence of remarks made at a visit of the Somerset Archæological Society, it was brought back and re-fixed. Would that the Society's influence might have prevailed in other cases, such as Ditchet and Compton Martin, where also the screens have been removed!

**NYNEHEAD (All Saints).** The nave section of the roodscreen remains, and is of the fan-vaulted type, with pointed arched heads to the lights, showing tracery of the "Exe Valley" type, like Halse, Combe St. Nicholas, and the Kentisbere class. The screen has been to a large extent renovated, and the cornice enrichments are almost entirely new, though part is said to have belonged to the Hillfarrence screen. The new enrichments, the work of a Wells carver, do not quite follow local patterns, but are a fair approximation. There are features about the screen which look like seventeenth century work, as for instance the caps to the shafts. The original screen, however, is probably no later than Henry VI's reign. The roodloft stair is on the north side.

Attached to the organ-case is some very fine carving—a part of the enrichments from Hillfarrence screen, which was bought, on its being turned out of that church, and used for the repair of the screen here, and general adornment of the church. There are two pieces of this carving, each about 6 ins. wide, and 4 ft. 6 ins. long, fastened one above the other.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 73; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXVIII, p. 61.

**OLD CLEEVE.** The roodscreen has been destroyed, and all that now certainly remains is a number of the lower panels, formed into a dado against the east wall of chancel. These exhibit a sunk enrichment very similar to some at St. Decuman's, having a crocketed canopy over an arched tracery-head in each division. There is a quantity of vine-leaf enrichment attached to the wall-plate along the south-aisle wall—which is reputed to have come from the screen, and this may be so, as it is rather an anomaly in its present position, and does not fit very well to the space. The screen, together with a north parclose, were standing in 1843, and are noticed by Rev. J. M. Neale in his translation of Durandus. He describes the destruction of a dragon as not only being carved along the roodscreen, but the parclose also. This is possibly the same piece of carving which has been transferred to Norton Fitzwarren.

The following are extracts from a will concerning the church:

"Wm. Byconylls by will Nov. 3, 1448, left to the repair of the north aisle 100s., and to the repair of the 'canopy celarium' before the cross of the same, 20 marks."

Neale's "Symbolism of Durandus" (1843), p. ciii; *Bath Field Club Trans.*, VIII, p. 275; Rev. G. Weigall in *Som. Arch. Proc.*, LII, pp. 39-45.

<sup>1</sup> An examination of the details of the crocketing in the tracery seems to show that this work has a much earlier date than others (see comparative diagrams). The finial especially shows this, and the arched compartment enclosing it has not the depressed form characterising the others. It is probably no later than 1420.

**ORCHARDLEIGH.** The corbels for the support of the Lenten veil remain in the north and south faces of the chancel wall, between choir and sanctuary, as in many other churches of the Mendip district. The staple is still to be seen in the hand of one of the figures.

**OTTERHAMPTON (All Saints).** The roodscreen, of three divisions, remains in a perfect state. It is of dark oak, unpainted, and is late Perpendicular in style, probably dating from the sixteenth century. The design is curious and contains many original features. It bears a remarkable resemblance in its general proportions, character of tracery, and design of lower panels, to the screen at Winsham. (See *COMPARATIVE ELEVATIONS*, Figs. 101 and 102.)

Other screens of a somewhat similar nature are those of Stockland Bristol (the next parish to Otterhampton) and Staple Fitzpaine. All these show rather elaborate and original tracery heads in rectangular compartments with a depressed arch form within pierced spandrels. In the case of Otterhampton the form is quite the late Tudor type.

**PAWLETT (St. John Baptist).** This little church is fortunate in having escaped modern renovations to an unusual extent. It retains a beautiful little screen of early Perpendicular type (Fig. 83), having simple tracery, rather of the same order as that of East Quantoxhead or Enmore.

The doors have been removed, but are preserved in the vestry. The cornice is fairly complete, and is well moulded. It contains some excellent vine leaf enrichment, and there is a good deal of old colour and gilding remaining on the screen.

The church also contains a good old pulpit of black oak (Jacobean in date) and some old benches.

**PENNARD, EAST (All Saints).** The old roodscreen has been destroyed, but there are fourteen exquisitely-designed panels incorporated in a western gallery, which have the appearance of having at one time formed part of it. These are delicately traceried, with richly varied designs, having a distinctly Flemish appearance for the most part, some being of a "Flamboyant" order. One seems evidently to be a bench-end—a central panel carved with the "Pelican in her Piety," under which is the sacred monogram, and crown of thorns. This panel is wider than the rest. These panels may be compared with those at Wiveliscombe (in a similar position), Bishop's Lydeard (in the lower panels of the screen), etc., etc. The roodscreen, now standing, is modern, and calls for little remark. In the chancel-seats is some good Jacobean work, and the pulpit is a good specimen of early Georgian work.

**PENNARD, WEST (St. Michael).** This church retains its roodscreen in a very perfect state, the cornices being in exceptionally good order. It has the usual row of narrow lights set in a rectangular framework. The tracery-heads, as will be seen in the illustration (Fig. 86) are shorter than most of the others, and of a slightly different detail, a necking being introduced around the finial. In the spandrels of the doorhead appear the Tudor Rose and Pomegranate, on the north and south side respectively. This fixes the date of the work as the first years of Henry VIII's reign.

Below the transom-rail on the south side of the screen are some very good panels of Early Perpendicular character, those on the north being of a different design and apparently "restoration" work, and within the wide "squint" or hagioscope on the south side of the chancel arch, is a low barrier or framework containing three more panels of a rather different design, which look as if they had belonged to the old rood-loft gallery-front. The two side ones are the best, and are carved with a sort of enlarged oak leaf, or smooth-edged vine leaf filling the elongated quatrefoils in their upper part—a rather original composition. The centre panel is

more ordinary. The great width of the squint by the chancel arch is to be noted.<sup>1</sup> There is a similar feature at Ditchet, barricaded also with an old piece of fifteenth century screenwork. The Church of West Pennard also retains fine old Perpendicular roofs to north aisle and chancel, and the excellent fifteenth century traceried doors to west and south entrances are specially worthy of note.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXVI (1880), p. 71.

**PILTON (St. John Baptist)** (Plate LXIIB). This beautiful church has been despoiled of most of its choicest interior features. The roodscreen which originally stood one bay west of the chancel arch was removed when the church was renovated, and after remaining for many years in the care of the Gale family, was offered to North Cheriton Church, and there re-erected as a chancel screen with considerable alterations, and the addition of modern work. The chancel arch in Pilton church is a composition of great beauty, Late Perpendicular in style, richly panelled in the soffit and obviously designed in this case for the roodloft—to be revealed in its full proportions beneath the loft and not cut or hidden by it, so that all its delicate detail would appear within the symmetric framing of the roodscreen. This is evident from the comparatively low proportion and depressed head of the arch, leaving a large balance of wall space over, in which may still be seen the set-off or shelf which indicates the position of the loft floor, the door of access to which is in the northern angle of the chancel wall.

It is probable that the loft extended westwards to meet the roodscreen, but this can only be a conjecture, since no positive evidence remains. The alternative would be a roodloft gallery of narrower dimensions, independent of the screen, and hanging against the wall over the chancel arch, a less likely supposition.

The screen was of tall and dignified proportions, the detail, so far as may be judged from what remains at North Cheriton, was of late character probably coeval or nearly so with the chancel arch. The parish accounts of 1498 mention a payment to Robert "Carver" for the "Trayle under the roodlofte," and in 1508, David Jonys, "the peynter," is paid for his work. The wall above the chancel-opening is of great height, and formerly exhibited a large fresco, which was blotted out by the vandals in 1850. It has been described as a picture of three kings meeting Death in the guise of three skeletons.

The rood and attendant images no doubt found a place over the loft in their customary position, and contributed to what must have been a singularly rich and stately whole. The position of the rood-beam has not been ascertained, but there remains in the south wall of the chancel an "angel" corbel for the support of a secondary beam or screen before the altar, as we have at Leigh-on-Mendip and elsewhere.

The screen (now at North Cheriton) is said to retain traces of mediæval colour. The openings have four centre-arched heads, each divided by mullions into four lights, and the heads filled with late Perpendicular tracery. The central mullion is thickened and ascends unbroken into the heads of the arches. Beneath the dado-rail (which has a sunk enrichment) are some very handsome traceried panels. The work has been a good deal pulled about to adapt it to its present place, and the head of the middle compartment has been lifted bodily above the screen, whilst in order to fill up the space within the limb of the arch, a quantity of spurious "Gothic" tracery work has been added, giving a general effect, curious, and on the whole, not unpleasing.

But although the roodscreen has gone from Pilton, that church retains its north-aisle screen, with a return, or parclose, of similar design (Plate LXIIB), and consisting of a range of narrow

<sup>1</sup> It contains the approach to the roodloft staircase, which is entered by a door on the outer, *i.e.*, south side, half-way through the passage.

vertical rectangular lights containing tracery of the "North Somerset" type (Fig. 86). These screens enclose a chantry chapel at the east end of the north aisle, now, alas! invaded by the hideous varnished pewing, with which this church is crammed.

The section crossing the aisle contains a pair of gates, later than the screen, and a subsequent insertion. They are probably of early seventeenth century work, having a strong Renaissance admixture with a general Gothic form—and the tracery heads over have been mutilated for their reception. Below the dado-rail of the screen are wide panels of a similar late character, exhibiting a variety of arabesques and foliage in low relief. There is an excellent vine-leaf cornice enrichment on the screen, probably dating from about 1498, when the screens were erected. The ancient colour upon this screen is preserved in comparative perfection.

There was standing in Pilton Church not many years ago a fine Jacobean pulpit, dated 1618, but this again was turned out to make room for a modern vulgarity, and has been re-erected in a Yorkshire church. The old pulpit-cloth was made from an ancient cope.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XIII, p. 21, and XXXIV, p. 63; *Som. Record Soc.*, "Pilton Churchwardens' Accounts."

**PORLOCK.** The old roodscreen, with its loft, is said to have been erected between the years 1250 and 1300. It remained standing until 1768, when it was taken down. Some parts of the demolished screenwork were found during the restoration, 1881-91—including fragments of linen-fold panelling, all bearing traces of brilliant colouring, and one showing part of the figure of an angel bearing a shield.

Dr. Cox remembers that about the middle of the last century there were a great many fragments of the screen, both tracery and beams, preserved in the tower. At this period there were various people living in Porlock who claimed to remember it standing, which seems to suggest that some portion may have remained in the church until a later period than 1768.

All the old fragments in the tower have now disappeared. There is a small window close to the roof-rib by the chancel-limit which appears to have been provided to give light to the roodloft.

Note by Dr. Cox, F.S.A.; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, LII, pp. 29-30; *ibid.*, XXXV, p. 28; Note by Rev. C. H. Heale.

**PORTBURY (St. Mary).** The roodscreen has been removed within recent years, and now stands in a much curtailed condition in the tower-arch (Fig. 84). It is stated that in the process of "restoration" the chancel arch was so modified in size or shape that the screen would no longer fit. Marks of the ancient roodloft may still be seen in the wall over the pulpit. The screen is interesting from its obviously early date, and agreeable design. Unfortunately, the traceried-head of the central doorway is missing, but there remain on each side three rectangular-headed compartments, containing excellent Decorated tracery of archlets with feathered trefoil cusping, and tracery spandrels—the head of the screen being surmounted by a good plain cornice with two simple enrichments. Under the rail are tracery-headed panels, showing simple trefoiled archlets with foliage spandrels.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXVII, p. 69.

**PRIDDY (St. Lawrence).** There are three sections of screenwork in this church, all of the representative local type. The roodscreen stands in the chancel arch, and the others in the arches north and south, in line with same. Both the roodscreen and that on the north are ancient, but the south-aisle section has been added in recent years, being the gift of a local family. It is designed in conformity with the old, but is not so good in detail. The roodscreen, as it now stands, shows six narrow lights, with the usual crocketed tracery-heads (Fig. 86), to the north side of the central opening; four in the central compartment over the door head, and four more on the south. Probably the last section was originally wider, but no doubt the screen must

have been narrowed when set back. There is the usual flat four-centre door head, but the doors are missing; and the cornice enrichments and cresting have also disappeared.

The lower compartments exhibit the usual pattern in the heads, of a cinquefoiled ogee arch supporting two quatrefoiled circles.

The screen in the north aisle is precisely similar in detail, but smaller, having three lights over the door, and two on each side. The hollows for two rows of enrichment remain in the cornice, but these were missing in 1902, when these notes were made. A remarkable stone pulpit stands engaged with the pier respond on the south side of the chancel arch, the wall behind it being curiously cut away.

**PURITON.** This church retains a small plain screen of oak.

**PUXTON (St. Saviour).** There is a plain stone screen in this church, of late date, very massive, and about four feet high, to the chancel-opening. It is the lower part of the old roodscreen. Traces of the old roodloft balcony have recently been discovered on the face of the nave walls.

*Archæological Journal*, LVI, p. 150 (1899).

**QUANTOXHEAD, EAST (St. Mary).** In this little church, whose interior possesses in a singular degree the old-world charm of mellow tones and rich harmonious detail, is a screen of the earlier and simpler type (Plate LIIIB), with rectangular openings, quite clear in their lower part, but having in their heads a pendent veil, as it were, of graceful quatrefoil tracery. This effect is produced by the loss of the mullions, which have been removed, as in so many other cases. The main framework divides the screen into three parts, each sidelight being further divided by a secondary main mullion, and as may be seen by the truncated ends of the tracery-bars, a single tracery-mullion was originally connected with these and formed two narrower lights in each division. The work is decidedly early, as the solidly-moulded framing shows. Against the main standards are pinnaced buttress ornaments, and the cornice is embattled. The lower panels are traceried, and a pair of low doors, rising only the height of the transom-rail, stand in the central opening. The screens at Culbone, Pawlett, Enmore, etc., are in a measure related to this. Some years ago there was a plastered or boarded tympanum over the screen, with paintings upon its face. The church contains a complete set of very fine bench-ends, with varied and original designs. The pulpit is a very early Renaissance work, with angle uprights and panels richly carved.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, LII, pp. 61-69 (illus.); *Building News*, March 24th, 1893 (sketches); Collinson's "Somerset" (Braikenridge interleaved copy), Vol. III, has a sketch showing the original mullions in the screen.

**QUANTOXHEAD, WEST (St. Audries).** The roodscreen, which was taken to pieces when the old church was demolished, *circ.* 1857, has fortunately been preserved, and after a sojourn of nearly fifty years in the lumber room at the Manor House, has been placed by Sir A. Acland Hood in the hands of a local antiquary, with a view to its ultimate restoration to sacred uses. The writer's attention was first drawn to the work by a notice in an early publication of the Camden Society, in which it was spoken of as a very beautiful screen, and recommended as a model. On local enquiry, all trace of it seemed to have disappeared, but it was at length found under an accumulation of lumber, and by Sir A. Acland Hood's permission, the fragments were measured and photographed, and the drawing made, from which the accompanying illustration is here reproduced by the courtesy of the editor of the *R.I.B.A. Journal* (Fig. 98).

The fragments are wonderfully complete—the crestings alone are missing, and have been added in the drawing according to conjecture. It will be seen that the screen is one of seven divisions, the lights small, and acutely pointed, the tracery very good and substantial. The screen is fan-vaulted, the fillings being prettily traceried. The cornice has

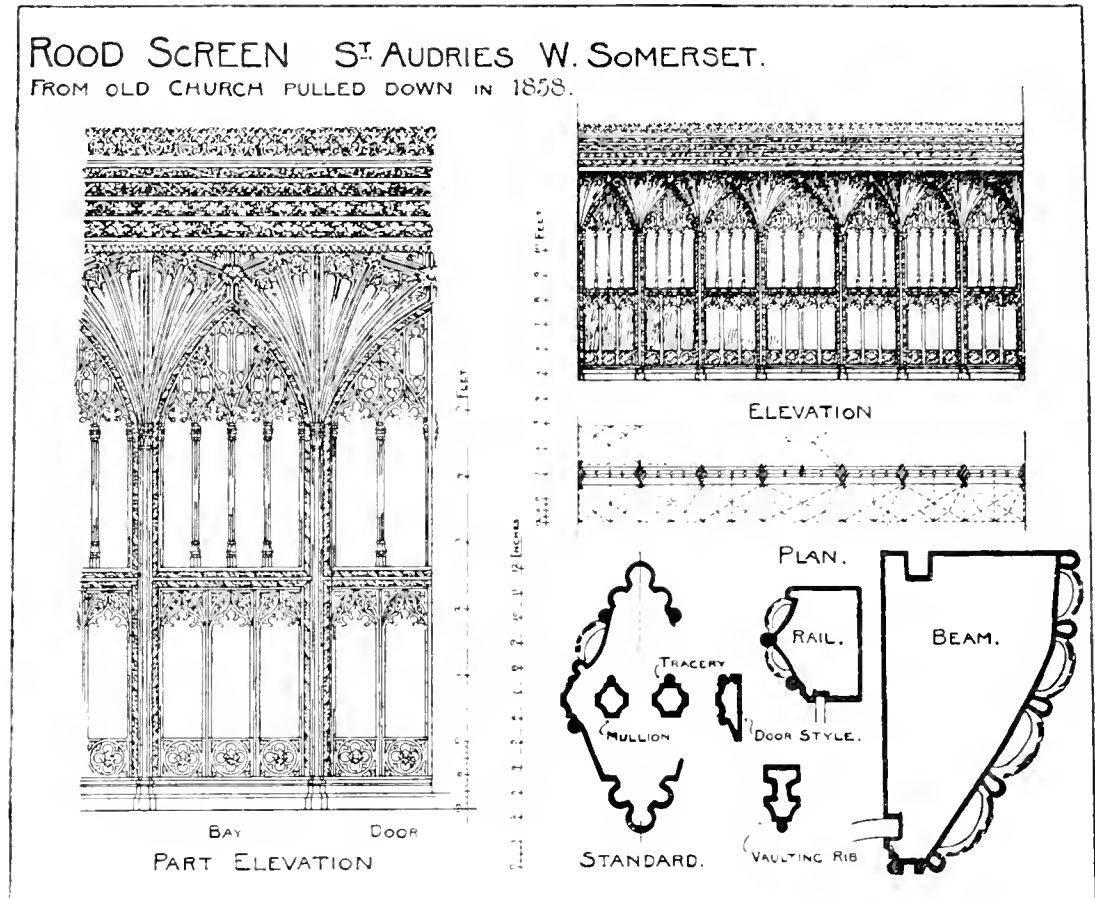


FIG. 98

four rows of choice enrichments, in which the vine and pomegranate *motifs* are delicately treated. The lower panels are well traceried. The whole has been covered with yellowish paint, beneath which are some traces of older colour, but nothing to give any clue as to the original scheme, if any, of illumination. The Camden Society record a tradition current in the early part of the last century that this screen came from Cleeve Abbey.

Camden Society's "Hints to Church Builders," 1842; *R.I.B.A. Journal*, 15th Oct., 1904, pp. 549-551; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, Vol. LII, p. 63; *Ecclesiologist*, III, p. 162; Collinson's "Somerset" (Braikenridge interleaved copy in the Museum of the Som. Arch. Soc., Taunton), Vol. III, f. 467, has an old sketch showing the screen in the original church, *circa* 1845.

**QUEEN CAMEL (St. Barnabas).** This glorious screen, majestic in its proportions, and the chaste severity of detail, belongs to the family of Somerset screens of which High Ham is the selected representative.

It is transomed, like High Ham, half-way up the lofty lights and in the arched heads is a delicate grille-work of Perpendicular tracery, the term being in this instance specially well justified. There are five divisions, the screen being to the nave only. The work is in perfect order, retaining the doors, and the fan-vaulting and cornices complete. The vaulting has some very simple tracery in the heads of the panels. The cornice enrichments are excellent, and very rich, but their luxuriance is restrained by the grouped bands of simple mouldings which encase them (Plate LXVIB). Altogether the spirit animating this work is one inclining to severity, notwithstanding the abundance of detail. A screen of very similar nature is to be seen at Meare, just over the Wilts border, where the effect has been further enhanced by the restoration of the roodloft.<sup>1</sup> Queen Camel screen stands just to the west of the chancel arch, which is very tall, and is panelled under the soffit. The screen appears to have been moved from its original position, not being quite long enough to fit. The ends have the appearance of being cut off.

The roodloft was erected by the parishioners—not by the Rector (*Som. Arch. Proc.* XXXVI). It is in excellent condition, and retains the mortises for images upon the beam and two larger mortises close together in the centre, for struts to the rood. There are also two more large mortises at equal distances on either side, indicating the position of four large images, two on each side of the rood—with smaller ones between for statuettes or candlesticks. The chancel arch, like that of Pilton, appears coeval with the screen itself. On the cap of the nave—respond on north side is a carving of vine-leaf with sinuous stem, something like what is on the screen. A few feet clear of the loft are two curious grotesque heads attached to a moulded rib following the east side of the chancel arch, with crocketed canopy work just below.

The lower panels of the screen are enriched with cinquefoiled ogee tracery-heads under foliated canopies like screens of the Dunster district—but with a single tracery panel below, instead of two, as at Old Cleeve. The pulpit is a magnificent specimen of mediæval woodwork, like those at Castle Cary and Long Sutton, and contains a range of fine nichework in which formerly there were a series of statuettes. The screen, some few years ago, underwent a careful restoration by Pearson.

*Bath Field Club Proc.*, I, p. 99; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXVI, p. 43.

**RADDINGTON (St. Michael).** The roodscreen is very interesting, being of the earliest Perpendicular work. It is of five divisions, three of which, *i.e.*, the doorway and the two lights on the north, retain their tracery-heads, which exhibit arched fenestrations set in rectangular heads, the spandrels being carved. The south side of the screen is nothing but a skeleton framework, one light being gutted for the reading-pew, and the other for the pulpit approach. The front of the reading-desk, facing west, is fitted with panelling dated 1713, incised like Jacobean work. The roodloft stairs are gone, the recess which once contained them being now used for a window to light the pulpit.

Some years ago this screen was badly mutilated, the moulded bressummer from the west front of the loft being carried back and attached to the head of the screen itself, the feet of the two carved triangular spandrel-brackets which supported it at each end, being cut off, together with the bases of the little shafts attached to them. An old water-colour sketch preserved

<sup>1</sup> Other screens affiliated in design are Banwell and Kingsbury Episcopi (both of which are later and much inferior in execution), whilst Pilton roodscreen (now at North Cheriton) has points of similarity.

in the interleaved copy of Collinson's "Somerset," now at Taunton, shows the screen and tympanum in a more perfect state, and considerable remains of colour and gilding.

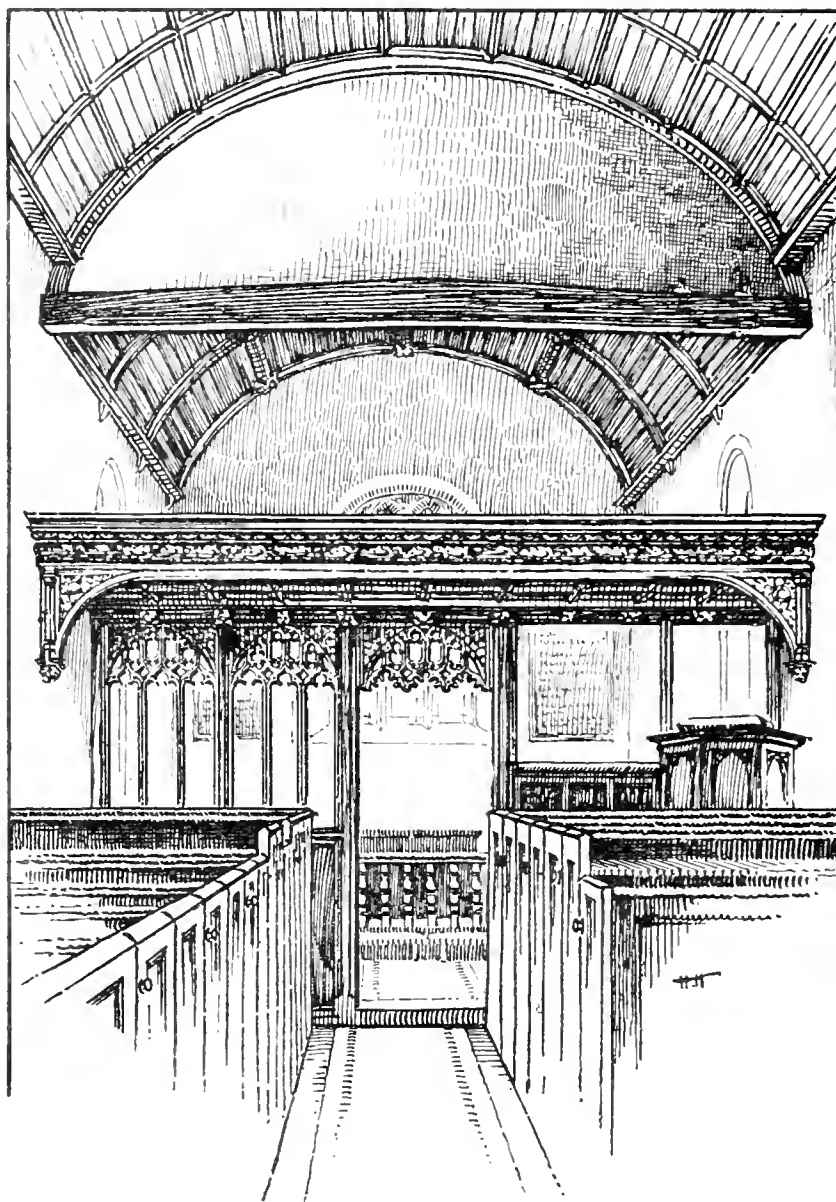


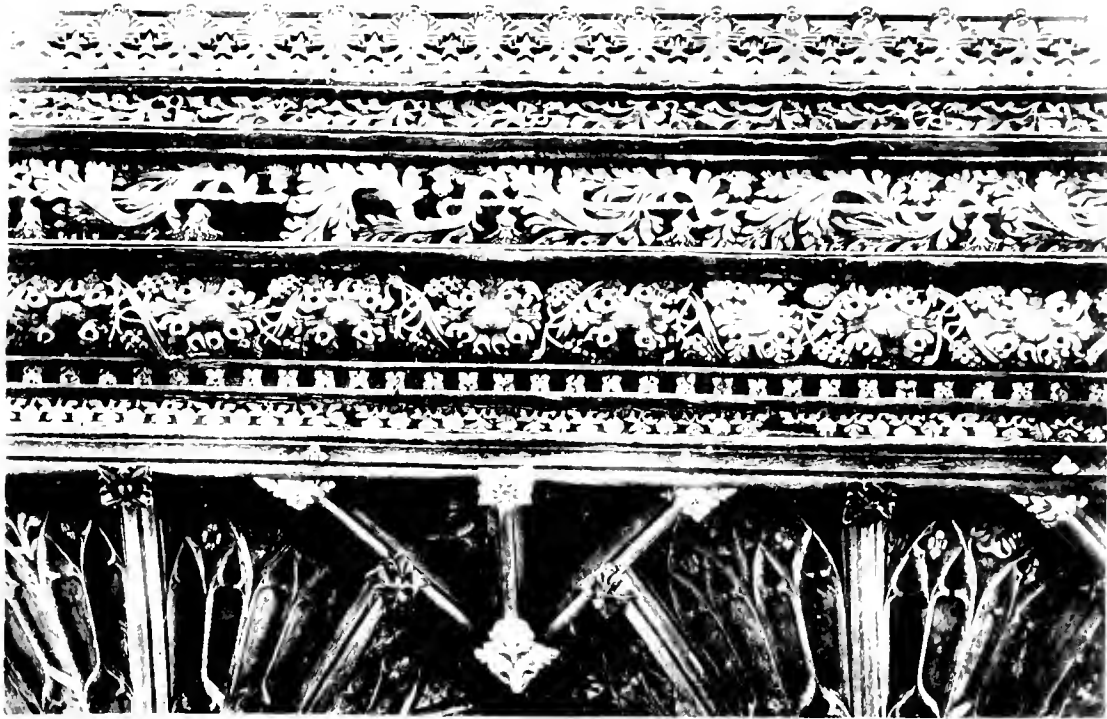
FIG. 99

In the accompanying illustration (Fig. 99), these brackets are shown restored to their original form, and the beam brought forward to its proper place some feet westward of the screen, the space between being panelled with a hollow coving, supporting the loft. The rood-loft itself we have not endeavoured to restore in the sketch, but the rood-beam with its " tympanum " above it is still there, the latter being now plastered over. Doubtless this once

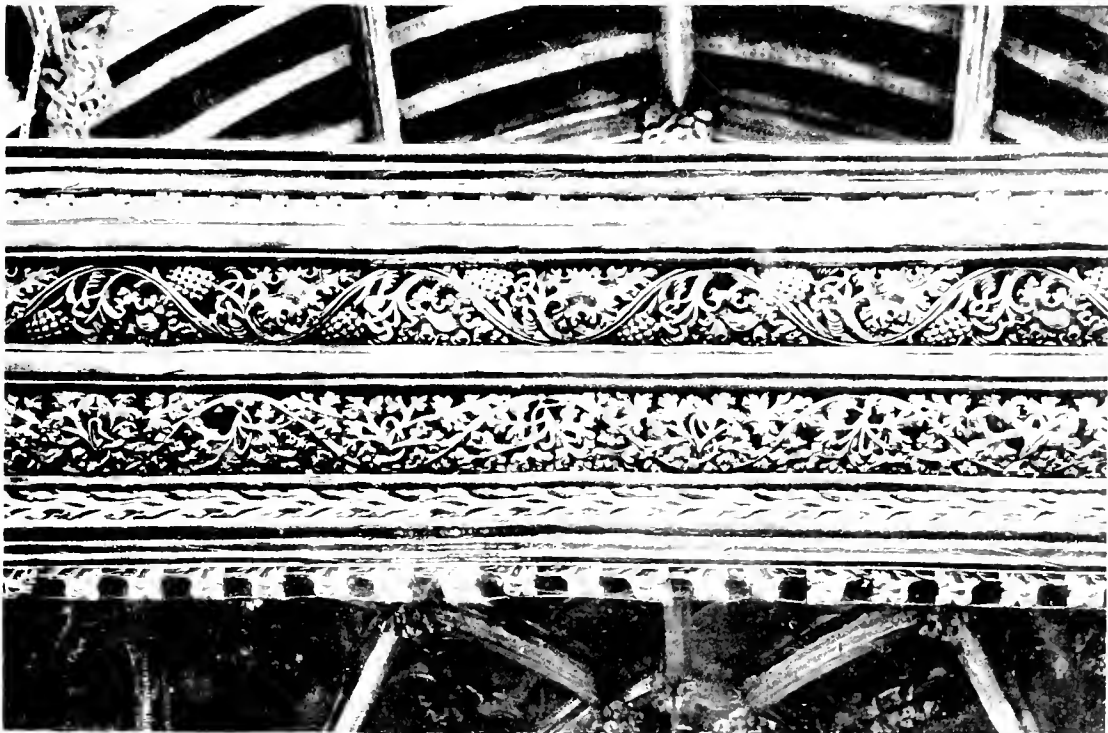


# PLATE LXVI

## CORNICE ENRICHMENTS IN SOMERSET SCREENWORK



(A) ROODSCREEN: HIGH HAM, SOMERSET



(B) ROODSCREEN: QUEEN CAMEL, SOMERSET



formed the background for a rood and statuary, and possibly, like so many other partitions of this kind, displayed some sort of sacred picture. The detail of this screen, particularly of the cornice, is good. It is to be regretted that the doors are missing. They were perfect in 1844, and were cited as a good model for adaptation to modern work in the *Ecclesiologist* of that year. The church underwent some "restoration" in 1845 and 1852.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXIX, p. 18; *ibid.*, LII, pp. 59, 60; *Ecclesiologist*, III, p. 162; Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 79; *Exeter Dioc. Arch. Soc. Proc.*, V, ii, p. 126; Sketch in Collinson's "Somerset" (Braikenridge Collection) in Taunton Castle Library, Vol. III.

**RADSTOCK.** The church contains a richly carved oak chancel screen erected to the memory of the former vicar, Mr. Nelson Ward, by members of his family, from the designs of F. Bligh Bond.

**RODNEY STOKE (St. Leonard).** The screen and loft in this church are of quite exceptional interest, as they furnish perhaps the sole surviving instance of a chancel screen with minstrels' gallery over it erected in the seventeenth century in accordance with ancient precedent and in a style approximating to that of the century previous under the influence of the Laudian revival (*vide* pp. 113-114). The church was thus adorned by the zeal of Sir Edward Rodney, *temp.* Charles I, who threw the heavy beam of black oak across the chancel arch, and thereon erected the ornate and beautiful gallery-front as we still see it, but the floor of the gallery itself has been cleared away. This loft was used for singers and instrumentalists right down to the Victorian era, a witness to the continuity of the old traditional use of the loft, at least in the West Country (Fig. 78).

The beam is covered with shallow surface-carvings in imitation of the lost Gothic craft, and the date, 1625, appears on two shields. Below it is a chancel screen of four open panels with curious arabesque heads. The gallery-front above consists of a balustrade of nine openings.

*R.I.B.A. Journal*, Oct. 15th, 1905; "Hierurgia Anglicana," 1848 edn., pp. 67, 68 (note); *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXIV, p. 30; *ibid.*, IX, i, p. 42; Walcott's "Sacred Archæology."

**RUISHTON (St. George).** Except for a half-dozen traceried panels, and a small quantity of other ornament, the roodscreen is entirely gone. The fragments remaining form a panelling against the east wall of the chancel, on each side of the altar, and from their nature, inspire a profound regret that the rest of so fine a work has vanished (Plate LXIIIc). These panels are richly traceried, with exquisite carved canopies over the traceried surface, the refinement of the work being more suggestive of mediæval cabinet work than screenwork. These are made up into a rectangular framework, three on each side of the centre, and furnished with a cresting of the usual strawberry-leaf type. The roodloft stair exists on the north side of the church.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XVIII, p. 66; Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 81.

**ST. DECUMAN'S (Watchet).** There remain in this church two screens, uniform in height and in general character but different in detail—the roodscreen, and another in line with it across the south aisle.

There is no screen in the corresponding position in the north aisle, nor is it probable that the fellow screen to those now surviving has been in existence for generations past, seeing that the roodloft doorway of access to the loft, in the north-aisle wall, is masked by the heavy mural monument to the brothers George and Henry Wyndham, who died in 1613 and 1624, the position of which, and its bulk, would prevent such a screen being fixed here.

Within living memory, however, there was a slight piece of screenwork in the north aisle—this was cleared away when the Earl of Egremont, with men in his employ, began to demolish the

screens. The Vicar stopped this proceeding, and the woodwork remained in the state in which it was then left, for fifty years or so—until 1891, in fact—when a general restoration took place.

A curious feature of this church is the existence of a second roodloft stair in the south wall, one bay westward of the other. The late Vicar, Rev. C. H. Heale, an expert antiquary, considers that this was the older staircase, and marked the original line taken by the screenwork, prior to 1491 or thereabouts. Up to that date, he believes, the church possessed a central tower, which fell, and in its fall, mutilated the screenwork. The registers mention the reparation of the church at this date. The church was then re-built without a central tower, the nave being carried one bay further to the eastward, and the screens, he thinks, re-erected at a late date, in this new position. A new roodloft stair turret was built in the north wall, in preparation for a loft, but it appears doubtful whether the staircase was ever used—the fact that a slab was placed over the upper doorway (*circa* 1625) showing that it was certainly out of employment in those days, and indicating a probability that the screens then had no loft at all.

There is, of course, the alternative possibility—a possibility only—that the southern section of the screenwork stood at one time in advance of the other—and by means of a return screen at right-angles to connect with the roodscreen, the desired access would be got from this side by a zig-zag passage along the top of the two screens. This is the arrangement surviving at Dennington, Suffolk (Plate XXVI), and which may have existed in other churches, but Mr. Heale's theory holds the ground for probability in the case of this church.

The roodscreen is very like some of the others in the neighbourhood, exhibiting the customary tracery. It has unfortunately lost all its fan-vaulting, its place being supplied by flat carved spandrels added at the restoration in 1891. The spandrels and cornice over were added at that date—the cresting superadded later by Mr. Heale, who also placed the carved rood over the centre. In a photograph taken some years before the restoration, the two arcaded bays south of the central door are seen to have been cut away down to the dado-rail, and their place taken by an open elliptic arch having a classic cornice, and "Grinling Gibbons" foliage spandrels standing out in bold relief on a flat ground. The work looks rather like that in Crowcombe screen, and may have been erected under the same influence. The date might reasonably be put down at about 1720. Mr. Heale says that there used to be a family pew of the Wyndhams in St. Peter's Chapel at the east end of the north aisle, with carvings and open Italian work very like that at Crowcombe in character, but coarser than what was on the screen. All this has now disappeared, and the roodscreen, with its two restored bays, presents a symmetrical appearance. The screen in the south aisle offers, as a variant, a thickened central mullion running into the arched heads. The lower panels exhibit several varieties of design, mostly having a family likeness to the "Dunster" pattern, and there are considerable traces of ancient colour on both sections of the screen, chiefly bluish-green, and red, with twists of red and white, black and white, and green and white, on the beads. There is also a parclose screen of simple Perpendicular character. The chancel arch in this church is a mere stone rib—a compromise between the West Country and Southern or Central English types of church.

"St. Decuman's Church," by Rev. C. H. Heale; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, LII, pp. 68-69; *ibid.*, VI, p. 15.

**SAMPFORD BRETT (St. George).** The old roodscreen has disappeared, and it is stated that it was taken out and destroyed in 1843, at a time when the church was sadly pulled about and modernised. The screen had stood for some time previous to its destruction, at the east end. The chancel at this date was lengthened, the old tracery of the windows removed, west door added, etc. (The window tracery lies still in the rectory garden.) At the same time a carved oak-font cover disappeared. The church still retains some very fine old bench-ends, which are now its sole remaining glory. Communicated by Rev. C. H. Heale.

# PLATE LXVII

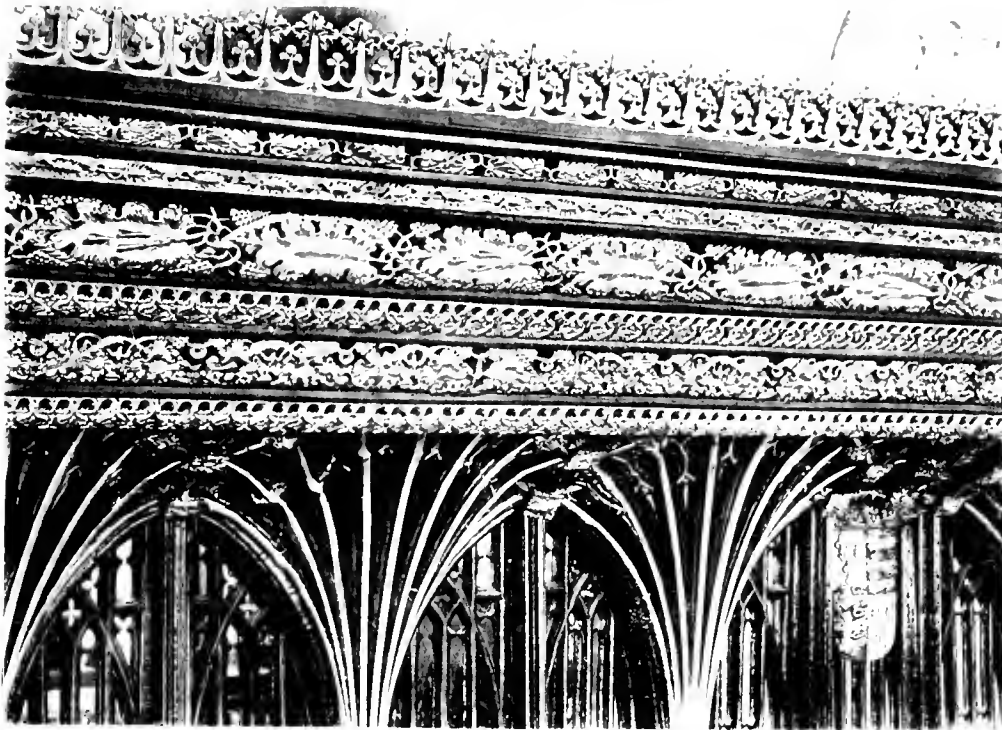
COMPARISON OF CORNICE ENRICHMENTS (SOMERSET AND DEVON)

No. 1

No. 3A

No. 2

No. 3B

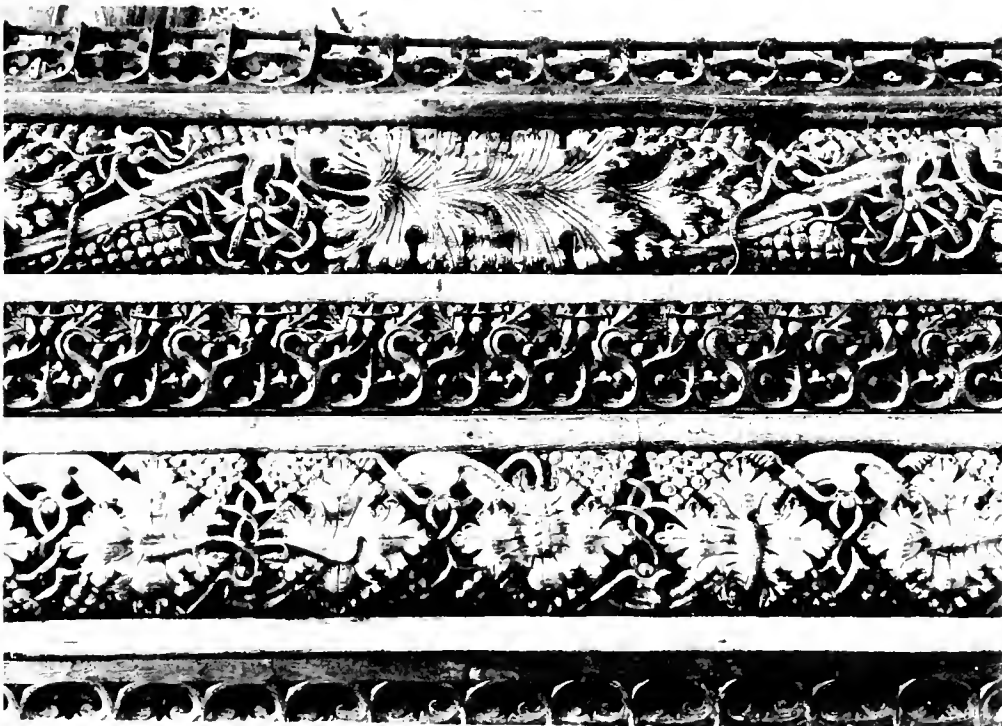


(A) ROODSCREEN: BANWELL, SOMERSET

No. 1

No. 3

No. 2



(B) ROODSCREEN: ATHERINGTON, N. DEVON



**SAINT KATHERINE'S, BATH.** Dr. Tunstall, writing in 1847, describes the hall as being then divided by a screen of elaborate workmanship, bearing the arms of King Henry VII. The church contains no screen, but has a very fine pulpit of Tudor date, with decorations and colour described by Dr. Tunstall as resembling that upon the screen at Wellow.

**SEAVINGTON (St. Mary).** There are remains of a triple chancel arch in this church.

**SELWORTHY (All Saints).** At one time a screen of oak, beautifully carved, stood all across the church. Its destruction is usually attributed to "Cromwell's soldiers," but if this be so, then, says Dr. Cox, "they were kind enough to store away considerable portions of it in that wonderful building, the old Tithe Barn." In that place, some fifty years ago, were the main beams of the cornice, for nave and both aisles. These were seen by Dr. Cox, who is also quite certain that this screen was one of the fan-vaulted order, like those of Minchhead and Dunster, though there were not many parts left. This screen was, as a matter of fact, destroyed at the same time that the well-made western gallery was put up, and the oriel thrown out of the parvise to make a state pew for the Aclands.

Large parts of the Selworthy screen were formerly kept (about 1850) by the old Sir Thos. Acland—grandfather of the present squire—in two small houses in Bossington. It is believed that some portions are still preserved, though not accessible to inspection.

Dr. Tunstall's "Rambles about Bath," p. 237.

The oak gallery referred to as standing at the west end of the church appears to be a late eighteenth century affair. The following notes are contributed by Rev. C. H. Heale :—"John Horne of Selworthy, by will, probably 1544, bequeathed 20s. towards the making of this screen. Edward Stenyng, by will, probably Jan. 29, 1524, bequeathed to the rode-lighte in the south aisle, 6s. 8d."

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, LII (1906), p. 34; *ibid.*, XXXV, p. 20.

No doubt the screen must have been considerably damaged by the Cromwellian troopers, as a detachment of Sir Hardresse Waller's brigade were quartered in the parish during the Civil War, and it is recorded that they wrecked the church, destroying the glass, and throwing down the altars.

**SHEPTON MALLET (SS. Peter and Paul).** Fragments of the old roodscreen are worked into the fifteenth century pulpit, and other parts of the church.

Note by Prof. F. J. Allen : *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXX, p. 18.

**SHIPHAM.** In the old church demolished in 1843 was a western gallery over the Baptistry at end of nave. This had a front of mediæval panelling with traceried enrichments, probably from the screen. The gallery was mounted on a solid wall, and approached by an external flight of steps on the north side of the church.

Collinson's "Somerset" (Braikenridge collection), Vol. III, f. 600 c., in Taunton Museum.

**SOMERTON (St. Michael).** What appears to be the lower part of the old roodscreen now forms a septum between the nave and south aisle, being turned at right angles from its true position. It has some fair tracery work. The chancel is lined with fine Jacobean panelling in excellent order, having a very rich effect. There is also an illuminated pulpit of carved oak, dating from 1615, and appearing coeval with the panelling. These features, with the oak stalls (which are fairly good) give a very satisfactory and pleasing appearance to the chancel. The altar-piece is dated 1626, and the Communion Table is of the same date.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XL, p. 37.

**SPAXTON.** The screen is removed, but the church is full of old carved oak. There is a mediæval pulpit, with panels, English in character; but the bench-ends are Renaissance, exhibiting Flemish feeling. One bears the date 1536.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, VIII (several pages of illustrations of woodwork at commencement of vol.) ; *ibid.*, XLIII, p. 37.

**STAPLE FITZPAINE (St. Peter).** (1) The screen at present dividing nave from chancel

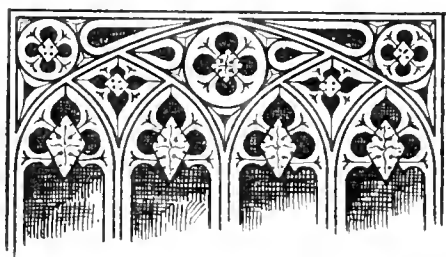
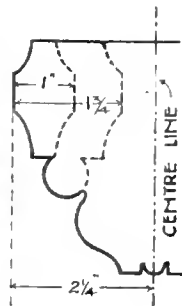


FIG. 99A



is not the original screen of the church, but has been brought here from another and much smaller church, probably that of Bickenhall (now destroyed). It contains the old doors, used as fixed lights, and there is an unsightly gap in lieu of central doorway. The heads of the screen are of a rather unusual type, somewhat similar to those

of Stockland Bristol. A neat embattled cornice surmounts the screen, but the head and framework seems mostly modern (Fig. 99A).

(2) Two portions of what appears to be the former roodscreen of this church still survive—one consists of a couple of bays with very good traceried heads, arcaded, in rectangular framework—the other shows a third tracery head now made into the back of the clergy seat. The tracery of each is different. We give an illustration of the latter (Fig. 99B).

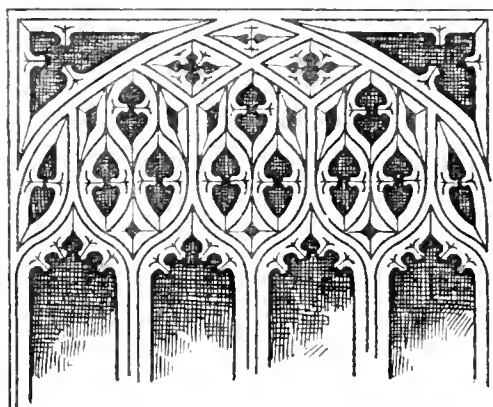
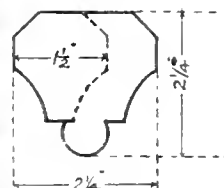


FIG. 99B



*Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, Vol. LIV (1908), p. 149.

**STOCKLAND BRISTOL (St. Mary)** (Fig. 100). The roodscreen was removed from the church when the latter was rebuilt many years ago, and portions of it remain in the custody of the Lord of the Manor.

It was a small, rectangular-headed screen of the same class as those of Otterhampton and Staple Fitzpaine, but showing considerable variety in the pattern of the tracery heads, and that of the panels below the rail. The folding-doors remain, also one side bay, in a fairly perfect state, and fragments of another. The illustration shows the effective nature of the tracery, which would make this screen an excellent model for new work. The cornice is unfortunately missing. The work shows colour and gilding, apparently ancient. There is some hope of a partial restoration of this screen, but not in its ancient form, because the proportions of the church are altered.



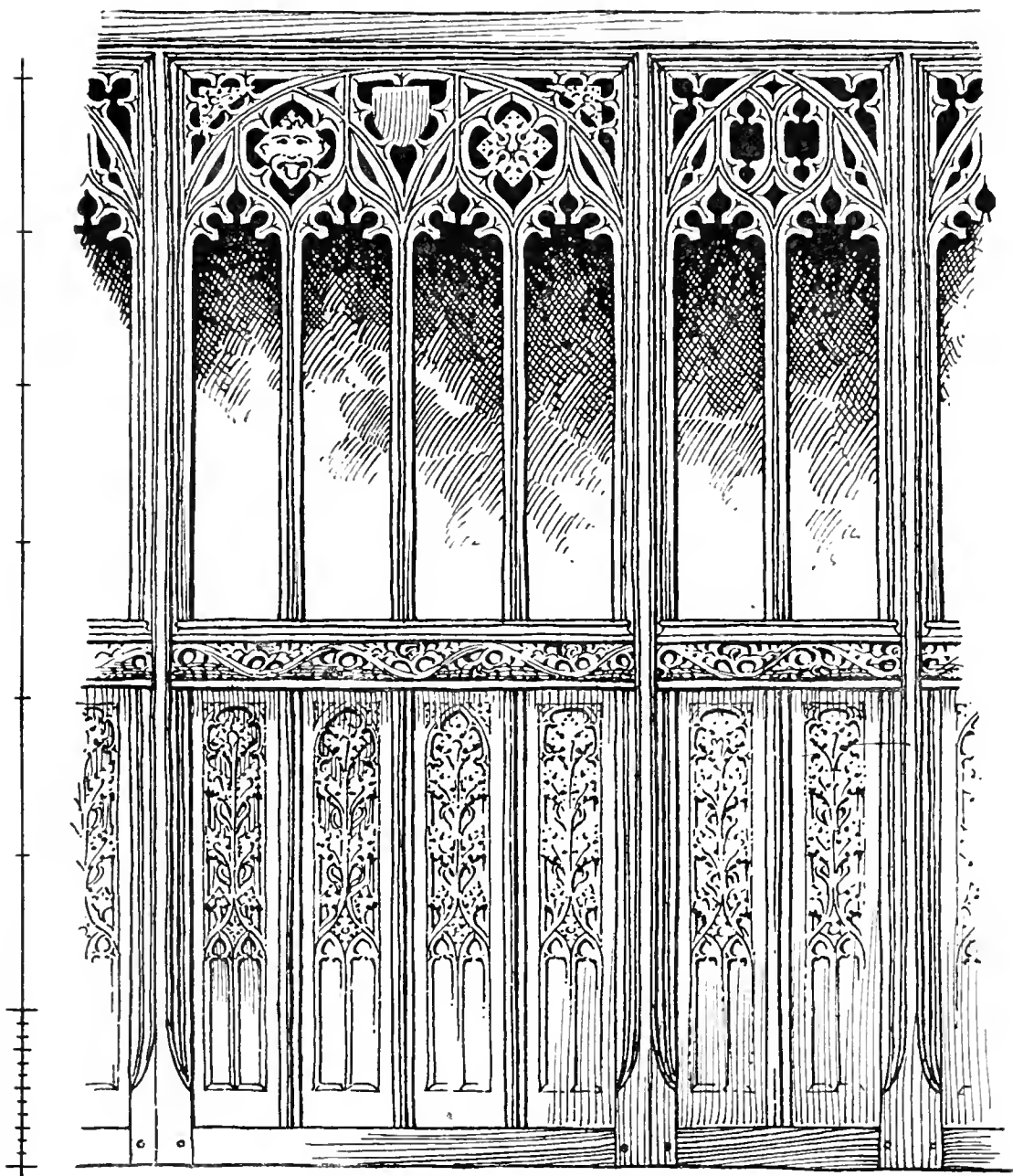


FIG. 100

**STOGUMBER.** The roodscreen has been broken up, but some interesting fragments survive. (1) Two pieces of the lower panelling, now fastened into a modern door at the head of the roodloft staircase. These are fixed one above the other, and between them is a piece of vine-leaf cornice enrichment. (2) Two of the traceried fenestrations of the screen are preserved in the Vicarage Loft, where they form part of a discarded set of altar-rails. They exhibit a character somewhat similar to that of the screen at Otterhampton—and are of late Perpendicular work (rectagonal heads). There is also a good fragment of vine-leaf cornice about 14 in. long.

Note by F. C. Eccles.

**STOKE ST. GREGORY.** The screen is gone, but there is a very remarkable pulpit, curiously carved, and a handsome reading-desk with linen-fold panels, and shields dated 1595 and 1268. The bench-ends are also very fine.

Jeboult's "West Somerset."

**STOKE-SUB-HAMDON (St. Andrew).** There is in this church a stone screen of the fifteenth century, removed some years ago to the eastern arch of the north transept. The church also contains a fine Jacobean pulpit.

*Ecclesiologist*, XXIII, p. 304, *Bath Field Club Proc.*, II, 356; *ibid.*, IV, 249; *ibid.*, VI, 230; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, IV, ii, 1, 9, 11; *ibid.*, XV, i, 56.

**TAUNTON (St. Mary's).** The mother church of Taunton has been rebuilt and retains no ancient screenwork. In the published account of the old church and its restoration is an interesting picture of the nave, showing the chancel-arch filled with a deep gallery over the screen, the front being apparently Jacobean, and having the royal arms in centre. Over the arch are the Tables of the Law, with large figures of Moses and Aaron. A sketch is given. (Fig. 70, *ante*.) The church contains some notable modern woodwork—there is excellent sanctuary panelling, and a particularly fine screen and gallery to the tower.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," III, p. 29.

**TAUNTON (St. James).** The oak roodscreen, finely carved, was removed some years ago, sold for £3, and re-erected in an adjoining house. Mr. Jeboult, about the year 1870, rescued some of these fine old carvings, and sent some of them to the Somerset Museum, where portions of the churchyard cross may also be seen.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," III, p. 29.

**TAUNTON (Wilton Church).** Had an old western gallery with the royal arms on it in the seventies.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," II.

**THORN ST. MARGARET'S.** The church has been rebuilt in a poor style, but a few old features are retained, amongst these being a section of the old screenwork, now fitted as a vestry partition on the south side of the chancel (Plate LXIIIb). Only about half the screen remains. Before the church was rebuilt it had stood for some time in the arch which separated the tower from the body of the church, but how long, is not known. The surviving portion consists of two perfect and two imperfect bays. The two perfect sections are narrow, each divided by a single mullion into two lights, and having rather rudely-cut Perpendicular tracery in the heads. These appear to have been the doors of the old screen. The two mutilated sections each form part of a four-light compartment balancing in width that of the two-door sections together, and suggesting an original arrangement like Otterhampton, Stockland-Bristol, or Winsham, but the work is much coarser and contains debased forms. The mullions have a rough baluster form, and there are buttress-like ornaments upon the standards of very unusual character.

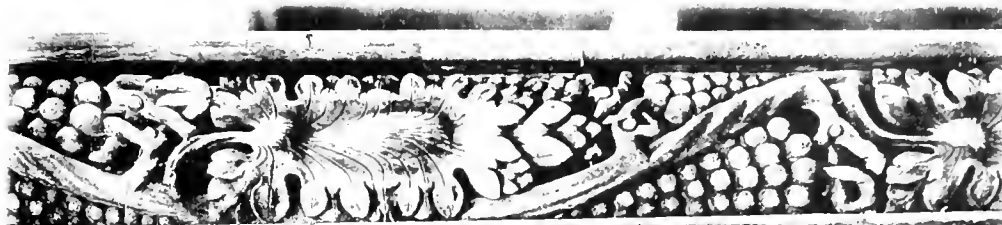
Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 91.

# PLATE LXVIII

## CORNICE ENRICHMENTS COMPARED

*The large vine-leaf in the upper row (No. 1) may be compared with those in Plate LXII,  
also the members numbered (2), (3a) and (3b)*

No. 1



No. 3A



No. 2



No. 3B



(A) ROODSCREEN: PINHOE CHURCH, DEVON

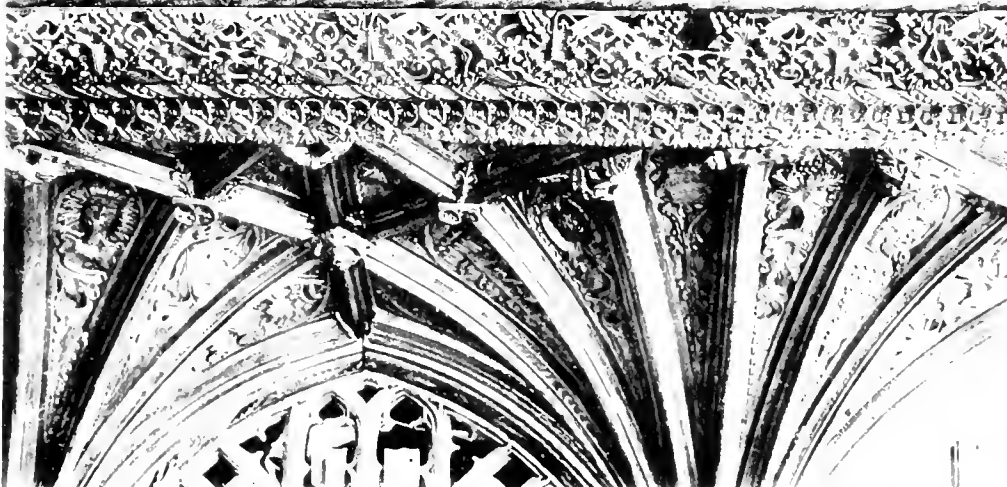
No. 1



No. 2



No. 3



(B) ROODSCREEN: KINGSNYMPTON CHURCH, DEVON



**THURLOXTON (St. Giles).** The screen here is almost a counterpart in style of the screen at North Newton, but this has only three bays to North Newton's five. With its massive fluted pilasters, heavy entablature, and deep arched heads all in black oak, it wears a dignified and sombre aspect, relieved somewhat by the delicate feathering of the arcades, and the fine enrichments of the frieze. The pulpit which stands at the south-west of the screen is a fine piece of work, with figures in bold relief occupying the panels. The benches retain some work of a character agreeing with that of the screen.

**TIMBERSCOMBE (St. Michael)** (Plate LXIVB). There remains of this screen the nave portion, consisting of five bays—the south-aisle portion has gone. This is a fan-vaulted screen, and happily what remains is well preserved, vaulting and cornices being perfect. The arcades are filled with well-proportioned tracery of Perpendicular type, the tracery heads being slender and acutely pointed as at St. Audries' (W. Quantoxhead screen). The cornices on the west side consist of the customary four rows of well-executed carvings, but on the east the members are uncarved, and consist of simple contours in the solid. It is to be regretted that at a recent date the panels of the vaulting and some other features of the screen were smothered with paint in the worst possible taste—patches of pale blue and sickly salmon alternating.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, LII, p. 67, and Plate VIII.

**TINTINHULL.** There was originally a stone screen in this church, the upper part of which would appear by an entry in the church accounts to have been removed in 1451-2 for the purpose of erecting a new roodscreen and loft upon its base. A rood was also added in the same year. 40s. is the cost mentioned of the roodloft, and 6s. 8d. for wainscoting same. The fact that the breastwork of the older stone screen was retained is worthy of note, owing to the fact that parallel instances exist in the county (Puxton, Compton Dundon, etc.), and in one case (Congresbury) the stone base is surmounted by a fifteenth century wood screen.

**TOLLAND.** In 1893, this church is described as possessing some portions of its old roodscreen, worked into the front of a western gallery in 1839. The roodloft stair turret and stairs remained. There was a well-carved Elizabethan pulpit, and curious old bench-ends. Other portions of the screen were lying in the belfry in 1844.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," II, p. 93; *Ecclesiologist*, III, p. 30.

**TRENT (St. Andrew).** The roodscreen is of five bays, very perfect, except that the north-end bay has been despoiled of its tracery in order to accommodate a doorway in the east wall of nave, and that at the southern extremity has had one-half the tracery also removed. The screen is of the transomed variety, like those at Mere and Queen Camel, but not so lofty or well proportioned. The detail of the lights is similar, but in this screen the central doorhead rises higher than the transom-line of the lights. The screen stands against the west side of the chancel-arch, in the same position as those at Mere and Queen Camel. No roodloft door is visible owing to the modernisation of the walls. The fan-vaulting remains, and exhibits a very remarkable feature in the girdle-rib which intersects with the fan-ribs, and runs round the vaulting-fan half-way up its height. The cornices are extremely fine, and contain three rows of enrichment with a small top-cresting, all retaining old gold and colour (Plate LXVB). The pulpit is a most interesting Renaissance work in oak, full of rich figure-sculpture, by a foreign artist. It appears Flemish or German. It stands by the south end of the screen. Opposite, against the north end, stands an old reading-pew, facing towards the church. This is covered with Gothic niche work, and appears to be made out of a pulpit similar to those at Queen Camel or Long Sutton, as the design is obviously the same—though the detail is inferior. The latter

remark applies generally to this screen, which is like a poor copy of Queen Camel screen, whose general features are here reproduced in a rough fashion, neither detail nor proportion being at all comparable to the other.

The lower panels here have the same sort of foliated canopy that we see on the St. Decuman's screen and others in that district. The church retains some interesting old bench-ends with a few poppy-heads.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XX, p. 76; *Arch. Assoc. Sketch Book*, 3rd series, III, pl. 6.

**TRULL (All Saints).** There are invaluable remains of old screenwork and other mediæval oak fittings in this church. The roodscreen is unfortunately mutilated. It is of three bays spanning the nave (Plate LXIVA). These are of extraordinary width. They have arched heads, and the screen retains its fan-vaulting, which is very beautiful, the ribs being multiplied (seven free ribs to each fan) and their narrow fillings encrusted with rich embossed ornament of the Kingsnympton type (see Plate LXVIII B (*Devon section*), said to be the work of a local carver, though to some extent influenced by Renaissance ideas. There is evidence of the former existence of a thickened central mullion running up through the middle of the lights into the head (as at Hartland, Burrington, Tiverton,<sup>1</sup> etc.), which would have restored the good proportion of these bays, but this, together with all the tracery, has been cleared out by some vandal of the nineteenth century. The cornices are among the best in the county, and consist (on the west side) of four tiers of magnificent vignette-enrichment, held by single beads, the lower or hanging crest also remaining, though the upper is missing. These are like the cornices of some of the Devon screens, as Kentisbere—but we can find close parallel in Somerset at Halse, Brushford, Withycombe, or Bicknoller.

The roodscreen is unusual in form, as it is complete to the nave, and never extended to the aisles. There is no provision for staircases, in the aisle walls, but the approach to the loft is curiously contrived within the pier on the north side of the screen, which is flattened for the purpose. It takes the form of a steep flight of steps—almost a stone ladder. This is now blocked up.

There are screens in both aisles, placed in line with the roodscreen, but of entirely different character, and not constructed to carry a loft. These are of excellent Perpendicular design, light in character, with rectangular tracery heads containing an arcuated form in pierced trefoiled spandrels. The double dado-rail with its pierced interstitial member (Plate LXIX B) is singular and very pleasing, being filled with beautiful tracery of ogee quatrefoils, giving a sinuous horizontal line. Between the cusps are carved pateræ, very rich in effect.

In the hollows of the moulded framework are small embossed stars, like those upon the vaulting at Norton Fitzwarren and Bishop's Lydeard. Over the doorhead of the north aisle screen is an obscure inscription. The lower panels are very good examples of the linenfold pattern but these have been recently badly mutilated by the schoolboy tenants of the pew abutting on the screen.

Against the pier on the south side of the chancel-opening is a panelled casing, made up of old fragments. It forms a back to the pulpit. This is, perhaps, the most remarkable in the county, having several faces, each exhibiting a large niche containing a carved figure of rather remarkable size. These most interesting carvings are in a singularly perfect state, and represent the four Latin doctors. Over their heads are foliated canopies, behind and above which are placed demi-figures of angels, filling the heads of the compartments. The angels of the pulpit are marked by crocketed buttress-standards, the salient members supporting smaller statuettes in hollow niches, of a diminutive order.

<sup>1</sup> Now at Holcombe Rogus.

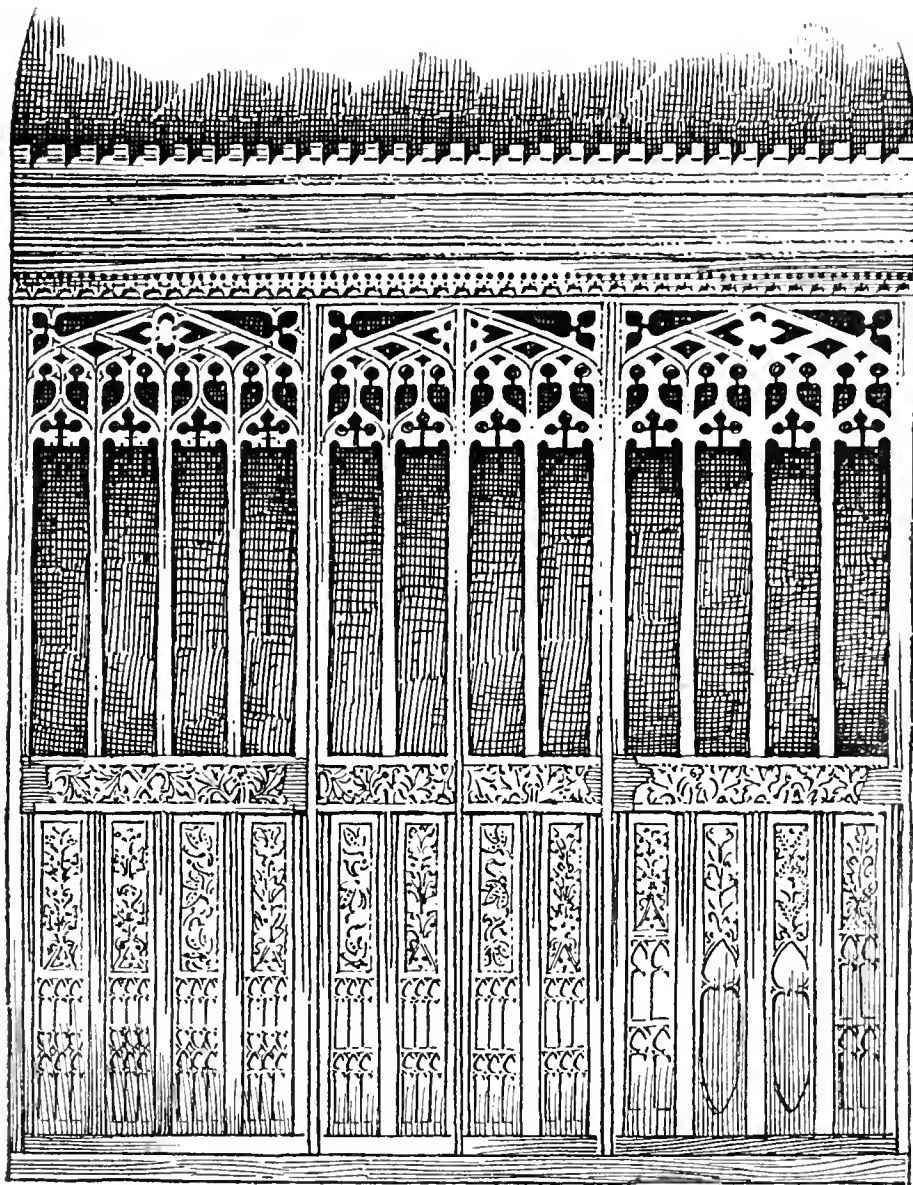


FIG. 101

There is no chancel arch in this church, which thus may be classed as one of the true West-Country type—but over the threshold dividing nave and chancel is a plastered tympanum, such as originally furnished the background for rood and images above the loft, and bore, probably, a painting of the “Doom.” What is beneath this particular tympanum is not ascertained.

The bench-ends are remarkably fine. Most of them are traceried, much in the same style as those at Milverton and other neighbouring churches, but a few show figures forming part of an ecclesiastical procession, viz., a priest, a deacon, or chorister, cross-bearer, etc. The date 1510 is visible on one of the benches.

At the west end of the aisles is some woodwork dated 1560, and inscribed with the maker's name, Simon Warman, which also appears upon the benches at Broomfield.

Colling's “Gothic Ornament,” Vol. II, plate 42; Jeboult's “West Somerset,” II, p. 95;  
*Somerset Arch. Soc.*, Vol. LIV (1908), p. 150.

**WATCHET.** (*See* ST. DECUMAN'S.)

**WELLINGTON** (St. John Baptist). The roodscreen is missing, but remains of it were stored in an outhouse in the “forties” of the last century. The chancel arch is late, and was evidently enlarged in the latter part of the fifteenth century in a very rough fashion, probably a part of a scheme for the introduction of a large and elaborate roodscreen. In other churches in the neighbourhood, as at Bradford and West Buckland, the face of the chancel arch was cut clean away in front (in the latter case in a bold and irregular manner) to make room for a late screen.

Wellington church contains a little old oak, in the shape of a few bench-ends worked up into pulpit panels, with others at a recent date in two gallery-fronts at the west end of the church. The reading-desk is Jacobean, apparently made from some domestic work. The pulpit is of Italian design, but ornamented with Gothic figures. The two large boards, with panel paintings of Moses and Aaron, from over the screen, are preserved in the belfry, as they are also at Lyng.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXVIII (1892), pp. 18-24; *Ecclesiologist*, Vol. II, p. 140;  
 Jeboult's “West Somerset,” II, p. 94-5.

**WELLOW** (St. Julian). (1) The chancel screen survives, and is in good condition. It is of oak, well carved, having the usual range of narrow upright divisions, separated by moulded standards, and with tracery of the customary kind (*see* Fig. 86). The lights are grouped in three compartments, the two extreme ones each containing four divisions set in a stout moulded framework. The doors, with another four lights over, occupy the centre. They are perfect and the doorhead (which shows the usual depressed arch) has some exquisite work in the spandrels. The dado-rail is enriched with a sunk ornament on face, and the lower panels are traceried in the manner common to many screens—with an ogee cinquefoil archlet between two quatrefoiled circles forming the spandrels.<sup>1</sup>

(2) In the north-aisle arch is a second screen of a subsidiary order, much plainer in design than the first, and lower in elevation. It has a little tracery in the heads of simple cusp-work, of Perpendicular type, and its chief interest lies in the amount of old colour enrichment it has retained. This screen fences a chapel which was at one time the chapel of the Hungerford family, and which still retains traces of its old magnificence in the very fine oak ceiling with its carved and coloured enrichments. The shields on the ceiling display the arms of the Hungerfords of Wellow, and the Troppells of Hassage, a local manor.

<sup>1</sup> The roodloft entrance is in the east wall of nave, high up on the south side of the chancel arch. Its position shows that there must have been a very lofty coving over the screen to bring the work up to the level required for the floor.



During the restoration of this chapel, two specimens of old oak panelling carrying remains of early painting were found supporting the lead flat adjoining the chancel-roof, and these appear to have formed originally part of one of the screens, probably the parclose on the chancel side (now gone). The old oak benches in this church are a notable feature. The ends have bold poppy-head finials, and sunk panelled enrichment. Both these and the screenwork are probably of early fifteenth century date. The church itself dates chiefly from 1372, when it was rebuilt, and is interesting as evidence of the early prevalence of the Perpendicular style in the district.

*Somerset Arch. Soc.* (Bath Branch), 1905 (?) ; Peach's "Rambles about Bath" ; *Bath Field Club Trans.*, II, 356, and IV, 244 ; Tunstall's "Rambles about Bath," p. 157 ; South Kensington list of painted screens.

**WELLS CATHEDRAL.** The pulpitum, or choir-screen, is one of our characteristic cathedral screens, and still exhibits upon its western face a good deal of very fair canopied niche work, though this is rather shallow in effect as compared with some of the others.

The screen underwent a good deal of alteration in the earlier half of the nineteenth century, when it was modified in shape, probably in order to accommodate a choir organ of larger size. A central bay was projected to the westward, breaking the continuity of the front in the manner now seen. An old drawing exhibited in the Museum of Shepton Mallet during the summer meeting of 1907 shows the appearance of the screen prior to this alteration, and the range of niches or canopies is there seen in alignment—no projection whatever is visible.

There are several instances of stone screenwork in the Cathedral, but none perhaps of very striking character except that which encloses Bishop Beckington's monument, and which possesses a cornice enrichment of running vine, perhaps the very finest of its class. Mr. Crossley's photograph (Plate XVIIA) shows well its perfections. Every line is instinct with vitality and breathes the soul of the artist.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXIV, p. 28.

**WELLS (St. Cuthbert).** The Corporation seats were originally part of a screen at Glastonbury. A portion of the old carved benches is illustrated, showing some rather original detail.

Worth's "Guide to Somerset."

**WESTON-IN-GORDANO (St. Paul).** The roodscreen remains in skeleton form, having been despoiled of nearly every feature which would indicate its original character. The framework still standing shows that it was a simple structure of early type, probably dating from the latter years of the fourteenth century. The cornice enrichments are gone, and the tracery of the fenestrations has been taken clean away, its place being filled now with a modern substitute, which though only attached very roughly, to some extent masks the forlorn condition of the screen. It is one of those little screens of three divisions, of which East Quantoxhead screen is a good representative specimen, and was probably very similar to that one. There are indications of the former existence of return screens enclosing chantry-altars attached to the western face of the screen. One of these return screens was *in situ* in the time of the previous incumbent. The slabs of the two altars, which have been recently exhumed from beneath the nave floor at the foot of the screen, are of polished stone, incised with the five crosses. There was a roodloft, the staircase being on the south side. The loft projected westwards towards a point where a bressummer formerly crossed the church, evidenced now only by the corbels remaining in the walls on both sides, some four or five feet westward of the screen.

The chancel contains a remarkable rank of old stalls in black oak, and the benches in the nave are of great antiquity—there being here some of those plain, rudely cut poppy-headed ends which are also to be found at Chelvey, Clapton, and Kingston Seymour, and some of which are

considered to be among the earliest benches extant. This church is celebrated for the gallery within the south porch, above the inner door, which here survives in a perfect form. It is approached by a stair in the wall in the north-east corner of porch. It is a purely local feature, being confined to North Somerset, where many churches exhibit traces of the same arrangement, as Wraxall, Portishead, Westbury (Wells), and a great many more. As to the ritual uses of this feature there has been much discussion, but the point appears to have been settled by reference to the Sarum use which provides as follows.

Rutter described the screen as having two small stalls attached to the east side.

Rutter's "North-West Somerset," p. 245; *Ecclesiologist*, XXVI, p. 69.

**WEST BUCKLAND.** A screen is mentioned by Jeboult, in 1873; also handsome altar-rails and benches stated by Mr. Parker to be of fourteenth century work.

**WEST CAMEL.** This church has, or had, a canopy of honour above the roodloft, in the form of a flat painted ceiling. In 1873 there was standing under the tower, a reading-desk, made of two old bench-ends.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXVI, p. 41.

**WEST HATCH.** There is some old carved oak incorporated with the pulpit.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," II.

**WEST MONKTON.** This church has a very beautiful Renaissance pulpit, with heavy sounding-board, and a flaming urn above it.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," II.

**WEST PENNARD.** (*See* PENNARD, WEST.)

**WHITCHURCH (St. Nicholas), BRISTOL.** (1) The church retains two screens which enclose the chapel on south side of chancel. Of these the more interesting is that which stands in the transeptal arch (Plate LXIII E). It represents a peculiar type of rather late work, very rich and including many original features. It presents many points of similarity to the Wrington screen and is probably by the same hand. The ornament running across the heads of the lights under the tracery is very curious. The cornice is rich and perfect, with an excellent running ornament, and a cresting which offers a delightful model, consisting of fluted shields held between the curved stems of a bold strawberry-leaf pattern, the interstices giving a very choice example of this characteristic ornament. Altogether this is one of the most effective crestings we have seen. The screen is altogether well worthy of study and imitation.

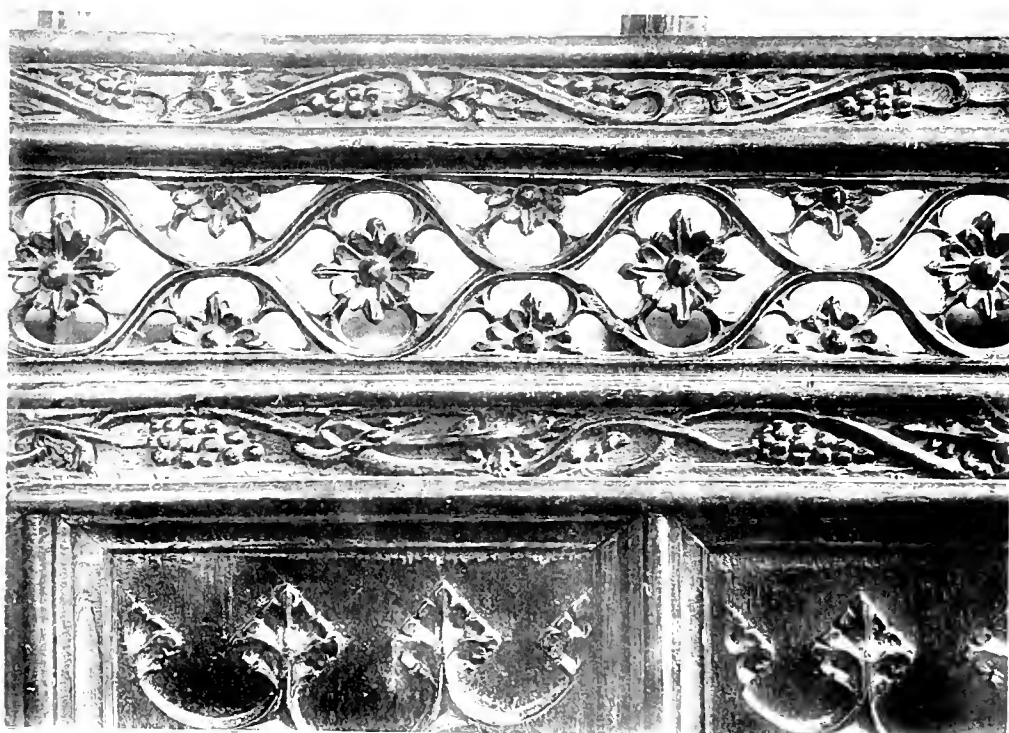
(2) The parclose screen between chancel and south chapel is a very much plainer composition and consists of a number of rectangular lights with X-form tracery in the heads forming triangular cinquefoiled heads to lights and trefoiled triangles between the arms of the X. There is some sunk tracery with flowing lines in the lower panels, and the transom has an enrichment of square sunk pateræ. This screen is probably much older than the other.

**WHITESTAUNTON (St. Andrew).** Within the reveal of the panelled arch of the chancel stands a very beautiful, though much mutilated screen. It belongs to the earlier school of design, and reproduces in the tracery-heads a character similar to those at Evercreech, showing the arch-form within a rectangular framework. The divisions are narrow, and of two lights, there being two on either side of the central opening, but, as an inspection of the framework shows these are not in their original place, and all trace of the central compartment or doorway proper, is wanting, there being nothing but a square reveal around it. The cornices, etc., are also utterly gone—and a modern capping of moulded wood, unenriched, supplies its place. The lower panels of the screen are very beautiful, and whilst reproducing in their upper half the forms of the tracery-heads of screen, in their lower they exhibit a range of narrow vertical panels such as we see on

PLATE LXIX  
TRACERIED DADO-RAILS



(A) ROODSCREEN: GRESFORD, N. WALES



(B) TRULL: SOMERSET



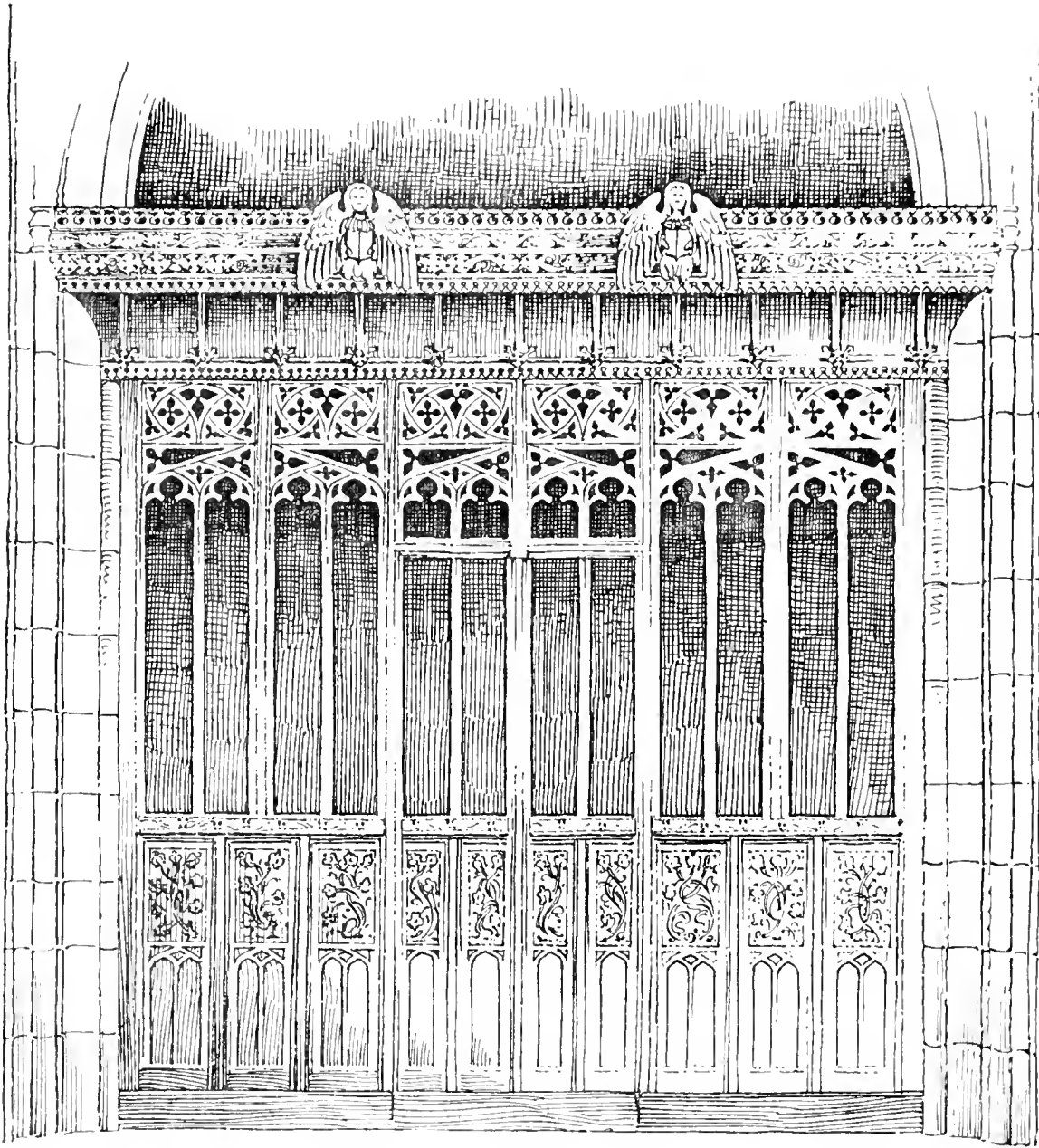


FIG. 102

the Flemish panel-work at Wiveliscombe or the Lydeards—but these at Whitestaunton are certainly English. They have been repaired. The old portions of the screen retain a quantity of original colour, red and green. The arms of Bath and Wells are worked into the tracery of the screen. Nothing is known as to the date when the roodloft, cornices, etc., were destroyed, but it is evident from the position of the staircase that there must have been a loft of large and wide dimensions. The chancel arch is also thought to have been enlarged to accommodate it.

Upon the wall at the east end of the nave are two blocks, which the Rector (Rev. H. R. Cartwright) considers to have been the supports for the figures of St. John and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In the north wall of the chancel is a mural screen consisting of a central doorway and four side-lights—two each side, in heavy stonework of Perpendicular design. The lights are guarded by iron bars. This screen forms a means of visual communication from the chapel on the north side. The lights are arched and cinquefoiled and from the heads a short vertical nosing rises, making the heads of the spandrels rectangular. The doorhead is a plain two-centred arch. There are some old bench-ends in the church, illustrated in the 1881 volume of these Proceedings.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXVII (1881), pp. 43-45; *ibid.*, XLIX (1903), pp. 31-33;  
Worth's "Guide to Somerset," p. 138.

**WILLITON (St. Peter).** The roodscreen was removed in 1854, when the church underwent a cheap and destructive restoration. A small fragment only remains, worked into a reading-desk. It consists of the larger part of one of the tracery heads of the screen lights. Fortunately an architect's drawing, taken at the period of the survey for "restoration," is preserved, and shows a pretty little screen, of five rectangular-headed bays, very similar to that of Enmore (now at Huish Episcopi) (Fig. 97), and that of Pawlett (Fig. 83). The screen is shown standing in a plain chancel-arch 15 ft. 6 ins. wide. It scales 8 ft. 6 ins. high to the top of the cornice. The framework of the two lights on each side of the door appears to be mounted upon a low stone plinth-wall, but this cannot be regarded as a positive certainty, only as a strong probability. Other screens in the county, as Congresbury, Puxton, and Compton Dundon, have this stone base, but those of Enmore and Pawlett have not. Prior to 1830, there was a stone pulpit, built into the wall of the church, of which all traces have now disappeared.

**WINSHAM (St. Stephen)** (Fig. 102). The screen, which stands in the eastern arch of the tower, is of a very unusual and interesting type, and presents points for comparison with one far remote from the district—that of Otterhampton, near Stogursey.

It is of a distinctly late type of Perpendicular work, square-headed, divided into six rectangular lights, each sub-divided by a tracery mullion. These lights are grouped in three pairs, the doors occupying the central pair, whilst the others contain some very effective tracery in which appear depressed Tudor arches occupying the whole width of the pair of lights, and divided centrally by the main framework separating them. Beneath the rail, which is nicely carved with a sinuous stem and leaf pattern, are the lower panels, three to each side-light, four to the doors, all well carved with embossed foliage patterns, in the upper two-fifths of their height, and plain below, except the doors, which have plain arch-headed panel continuations. The head of screen retains its ancient horizontal coving or canopy on both sides divided into square sections by eleven vertical ribs, each having a good boss at springing, whilst a delicate invert-cresting runs across the head below them.

The cornices, both east and west, are excellent and well preserved, and consist of two rows of vignette enrichments with bead divisions and top and bottom crestings.

The screen was carefully restored in 1899, at the expense of the late Rev. Henry Ware, son of a former Vicar, and all the old work was preserved, additions only being made where it was

hopelessly decayed or damaged. The top cresting required to be replaced as it had been removed at a former period, when a floor had been constructed across the tower (which here stands centrally between nave and chancel) for the bellringers' use. This floor had been placed at the level of the top of the screen in 1822 (*vide* minute of Vestry meeting of November 15th, 1821).

When the restoration was effected, the canopy of the screen, which had been repaired in deal, was made good with oak, and the missing ribs added. At the same time the ringers' floor was cleared away, and both arches of the tower opened up by the removal of the solid partitions filling them: thus clearing the vista between nave and chancel, and removing an obstruction which practically divided the church into two separate parts, and which, as may be easily judged from an inspection of old photographs in the possession of the present Vicar, had a most depressing and miserable effect, the appearance of the chancel-approach from nave being that of a long low passage or rectangular tunnel with a plaster ceiling.

The partition which stood in the *western* arch of the tower (and beneath which arch a second or western screen formerly stood) was of Post-Reformation date, and took the place of a former roodloft gallery front. That the old roodloft extended westwards to this point is evidenced by the position of the roodloft stairs which are in one of the western turrets of the tower. The partition was of boarding, on which were the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, surmounted by the royal arms, dated 1660, or 1662. But the other partition—that which surmounted the eastern screen, proved, on examination at removal, to be of far greater interest and ecclesiological value, as it bore the remarkable painting of the Crucifixion, which has been the subject of special notice in the Proceedings of local Archæological Societies.

This "tympanum" painting is now preserved on the north wall of the tower. Its date cannot be earlier than that of the screen, and may be ascribed to one of the earlier decades of the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Attached to the western face of the cornice of the screen are a pair of large carved angels bearing shields. These were found, before restoration, affixed in a mutilated state (each minus a wing) to the extreme ends of the cornice-beam on the eastern side of the screen—but it is more than doubtful whether any such position could have been their original one. From their size it may be conjectured either that they occupied some position of honour in the "pageant" above the rood-beam, or that they originally acted as corbels in the roof. Their present appearance is, however, good enough to justify their retention upon the cornice.

The church formerly contained two galleries, one over the other, at the west end—the lower of which projected for nearly two-thirds of the length of the nave, and contained in its front, some very good Jacobean panelling with turned balusters over, broken in the centre by a later panelling (apparently late Georgian) containing an organ-pipe front, and a religious picture. The upper gallery was shallower, and was constructed for singers, and here the various musical instruments were formerly played. There is an entry in the Register, recording the apportionment of the seats "in the new gallery, erected in 1620," and again of those in the additional part erected in 1635.

Pullman's "Book of the Axe," p. 176; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XLIX, pp. 43, 56, illustration of tympanum; *ibid.*, XXXVII (1891), p. 30; *Brist. and Glos. Arch. Journal*, Presidential Address, by F. F. Fox, Vol. XXIII.

**WITHAM FRIARY (St. Mary the Virgin).** The roodscreen was removed in 1832 in the "restoration" carried out by Rev. C. G. R. Festing. It is said to have been very beautiful.

*Som. Arch. Journal*, XXXIX, 33.

A small fragment of the vine-leaf cornice enrichment of the screen is preserved.

*Som. and Dorset Notes and Queries for June*, 1909, p. 261.

<sup>1</sup> The late Mr. Thomas Garner (a great authority) considered that this painted rood really dated from the reign of Queen Mary I, and was hastily made to take the place of the sculptured rood destroyed in the previous reign.

**WITHYCOMBE** (St. Nicholas). The roodscreen is of five bays, fan-vaulted, very massive and well-proportioned, and in black oak. It is almost identical with that of Carhampton, but conveys a totally different impression on account of its being unpainted. The cornice originally had five rows of enrichments, almost equal in width, like the other screens of this group, but the lowest has been removed, and the cresting has also disappeared. The tracery remains in the heads of the lights, but the mullions have been taken away, only their caps being left, pendant-fashion. The doors are gone, and the doorhead is filled with tracery to match the rest. The vaultings have excellent tracery fillings. The character of the work in the lower panels is debased, suggestive of a very late date. They are similar in execution to much of the Jacobean imitation of Gothic work found elsewhere in the county.

**WIVELISCOMBE** (St. Andrew). The church is an unsightly barn of 1829, and all that remains of its ancient splendour is to be found in the pulpit, organ-case, and western gallery, all of which contain panels of a most delicate and beautiful workmanship, similar in character to those in the lower part of the screens at Bishop's Lydeard, Lydeard St. Laurence, and White Staunton. Similar work is to be seen in the pulpit at Monksilver, and in the western gallery at East Pennard, and also at Milverton. They are distinctly foreign in design, and probably the work of a Flemish or French carver. A few more of these beautiful carvings from the church at Wiveliscombe may be seen sawn up and worked into a window-box in the old house (restored) at the corner of the market square. It has been suggested that a good deal of the work in this district having a foreign appearance was done by a band of Flemish carvers who went through the counties of Somerset and Devon about 1540, staying for a time and working at various places, though whether this has been stated on the authority of old records the writers cannot say.

Jeboult's "West Somerset," pt. II, p. 104.

**WOOTTON COURTNEY.** In the "fifties" of the last century, during the incumbency of Mr. Richards, the main beam of the old roodscreen was preserved in the stable-loft at the Vicarage, also one or two of the moulded uprights and part of the panelled base of the screen. Dr. Cox, who remembers these, says his recollection is somewhat vague as to whether there were any remains of tracery or not, either as separate pieces or in the panelling. But there were considerable remains of the screen, and Mr. Richards used to point out the marks in the chancel-arch whence it was very obvious that the screen had been wrenched.

Communicated by Dr. Cox.

**WRAXALL** (All Saints). The ancient roodscreen was long ago removed, but within recent years its place has been taken by a modern work of the first order. The type is not precisely one indigenous to the county, but is sufficiently in harmony with local feeling to escape adverse criticism in this respect. The proportions and detail are good and harmonious, the tracery of the fenestrations being particularly good. The screen is vaulted, and the organ stands upon the loft in the north-aisle section—a commendable example—leaving the floor of the church free from encumbrance. There is a rich parclose to the south chapel in harmony with the other. The church is noted for its bench-ends, which are traceried, and shouldered up to poppy-heads of interesting type.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXVII, p. 42.

**WRINGTON** (All Saints). The church is very spacious with the widened chancel arch showing the influence of the "West-Country" model. The roodscreen with its aisle continuations stands in a very perfect state (Plate LXIIIa). It is in three distinct sections, each fitted to its arch, and all three practically uniform in design, consisting of a series of elongated rectangular



panels divided by standards to which are attached the delicate buttress forms with clustered pinnaced heads which are so admirable a feature of the Keynsham screen. These lights are each sub-divided by a stout tracery mullion and the heads are filled with a peculiar and rather effective sort of tracery, very different from what other local screens can show, and perhaps analogous to none now existing, except the screen at Whitchurch, which has the same peculiarity in the depressed archlets with their fringe of minute "pellets" as a substitute for cuspation ornaments over the long lights, and that of Long Ashton, in the nave section, which has tracery of a like form, though different detail. The heads also have some affinity with those of the fragment of screenwork surviving in the south-aisle chapel at Congresbury, though the latter are much earlier in character, and purer in form. The date of the Wrington screen is not known, but it is certainly a late one, probably sixteenth century. The cornices are in good order, and retain a fine enrichment—a broad band of vine-leaf, very convex, and with a rather unusual type of stem-work and also small ornamental members above and below.

The screen was in great danger of being swept away in 1858, but was saved by the intervention of the Rector of Burrington.

*Brist. and Glos. Arch. Soc. Proc.*, 1903, p. 18; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXIII, p. 15; Rutter's "North West Somerset," p. 129 n.

**YATTON (St. Mary).** The roodscreen, which was a magnificent affair, stretched across the nave, and probably both aisles. There remains in the north wall the stump of a carved stone support for the front beam of the loft. The chancel arch also exhibits a double series of corbels, one set of which may not improbably have reference to the position of the loft. Until recently all trace of the actual screenwork was lost, but one small fragment of tracery came to light shortly before 1881, and quite lately, one of the statues which formerly decorated the loft has been placed in the hands of the Vicar by the late Colonel Bramble, F.S.A. The churchwardens' accounts, which are published, are quoted elsewhere (*vide* p. 139). They show that the roodloft was erected in 1450-1456, painted and gilt, and it bore sixty-nine images, for which 1s. each was paid to the "image-maker." The screens inspected as models for the work were those of Easton-in-Gordano, Frome, Selwood, and Bitton. An older loft was removed to make way for the new one.

There were also four parclose screens, erected in 1480-1, but these also have vanished, and the existing oak screens in the arches north and south of chancel are from the design of George Edmund Street, who was also responsible for the choir-stalls. Quite recently a screen, reproducing the mediæval "North Somerset" type of design has been placed in the arch at the east end of the south aisle. This was the gift of the Vicar, and is of fumed oak.<sup>1</sup>

*Bristol Times and Mirror* (file), Nov. 1st, 1906; *Som. Arch. Proc.*, X; *ibid.*, XXVII, p. 13; "Yatton Churchwardens' Accounts" (*Som. Record*), quoted by Dr. Cox in *Church Times*, Feb. 22nd, 1907.

**YEOVIL.** An interesting survival in this church is noted, in the sculptured corbels (in the form of heads) built into the chancel walls on north and south, over the position of the altar rails, for the support of the Candlebeam, or Lenten Veil in the old English liturgical uses.

*Som. Arch. Proc.*, XXXII, p. 30.

<sup>1</sup> Carved from the design of F. Bligh Bond by Yatton parishioners.

## END OF VOLUME I













D 000 208 456 4

